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The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1890.

FACTS AND COMMENTS.

A good many people who have had, or made, occasion to write about M. Maurel's lecture last week, have complained that the distinguished singer told them nothing that was new. In saying this they have, for the most part, the air of slaying M. Maurel with an epigram. Now, even an epigram can be false sometimes; but the epigrams directed against the Lyceum lecture, although true, have the further disadvantage of being pointless. For the real matter is this: that such truths as M. Maurel uttered are precisely those which nobody nowadays thinks worthy of remembrance. We do not share the apparent aversion to truth which would be the natural corollary of so many of the criticisms which have been offered: and we are not unprepared to defend the assertion that a truth is not a real truth until it is accepted and made the basis of conduct, whether in the moral or the artistic sphere. If a man—especially one who is admittedly an authority—perceives that certain elementary principles of art receive no more than academic credence he is justified in stating them again and again until their acceptance is more than a matter of form. The application of these profound sayings to the matter under consideration is, we may hope, obvious. M. Maurel's lecture was devoted in the first place to a short description of the genesis of the modern lyric drama; and in the second to an analysis of the chief things essential to the making of a lyric-dramatic artist. We are willing to admit that M. Maurel added little to our historical knowledge, and that much of what he said in this regard has already been equally well said. But we cannot see that there was a superfluous word in his statement of the qualities needed by the interpreter. He spoke, for example, of the necessity, on the interpreter's part, of historic and artistic study, that he may understand the inward, as well as the outward, characteristics of the epoch and country to which belongs the story he is illustrating; he spoke of the necessity for a sufficient endowment of intellect to enable him to understand the psychology of the character he is representing; and above all he insisted (though this point was developed more in the earlier than in the later lecture) that the artist must be a sufficient master of the technical resources of his art to be able to indicate the subtleties of the character in his voice as well as in his gestures and bearing. So stated, M. Maurel's remarks may appear so incontrovertible that they pertain to the dull region of platitude; but surely a platitude is, accurately speaking, a truth which is so familiar that it has become an unconscious part of our mental and moral life.

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To those, then, who have said that M. Maurel is among the platitudinarians we have a right to put this question: Where is the evidence that these truths have a vital existence for any considerable number of artists—or critics? Of course the few capable critics in London are aware of them; but the large majority give no sign in their writings that they start out on the judgment of any artist equipped with such a set of æsthetic "first principles." And it is quite certain that the enormous majority of English singers are entirely unacquainted, if not with the necessity (at least with the method) of changing the "colour" of their voices. Mr. Sims Reeves and Mr. Santley are almost alone. And, if we may judge from the number of students who appear in an unending stream, few of the teachers of singing in England attempt to impart to their pupils information which would be of such inestimable value. From which it is fair to argue that M. Maurel's "truisms" were wanted.

* *

There was at least one passage in the lecture which gave everybody cause for satisfaction—that in which M. Maurel asserted that the social condition of the singer is much better in London than in the Continental cities, where, he said, many of the old barriers between society and the artist are still standing, and where the latter's true dignity receives but imperfect recognition. Whether this is due to an increased sensibility of musical taste on the part of London Society we take leave to doubt, believing it due chiefly to the fact that the profession itself is recruited to-day from the ranks of the better classes, and is altogether much better educated than was usually the case a couple of decades ago. Moreover, the artist of to-day knows better than did his predecessor how to make clear the dignity of his vocation. He must go still further, however. It is not enough that a brilliant soprano or a popular tenor should be the idol of a dozen fashionable drawing-rooms. He should aim (both sexes are understood) at becoming a great social force, strengthening by his personality as much as by his art the position of music as a factor in intellectual life. The example set by Rubinstein, who is understood to have resigned the directorship of the Conservatoire at St. Petersburg because the Czar took no notice of a memorandum which had been drawn up by the great pianist, is one which should be followed by all musicians. Followed, of course, in its spirit rather than its letter, for Czars and Rubinsteins are equally scarce at any time. At any rate, Rubinstein is on the side of Beethoven, and Liszt, and many others, who have forced the world to see that the artist is also a king in his own right.

* *

It is hard indeed to write or even to think with proper moderation of the circumstances which will have culminated in the decease of Sir Chas. Hallé's orchestral concerts. We spoke with sufficient plainness last week of the apathy exhibited by the London amateur towards Mr. Henschel's Symphony Concerts, and on that point there is little more to be said. But the announcement which has been made that Sir Charles will abandon his present series of concerts after that to be given on Feb. 20, is, if possible, a more significant, a more deplorable thing. For there can be no indiscretion now in saying that at the concert of last week there seemed to be good ground for hoping that better times were at hand. The audience was considerably larger than on any previous occasion; and it was stated to the critics that, though a circular similar to that previously issued by Mr. Henschel had been prepared and printed for distribution on Friday, the management, encouraged by the support given, had decided not to issue it. Hereupon many began to rejoice, and indeed pointed out that the increase in the attend-

ance was due to the composition of the programme. Now, one of the ablest and most clear-headed of the London critics had said, a week before, that Mr. Henschel's failure to win support arose from the fact that he did not include enough music by Beethoven and Wagner in his programmes. We confess our inability to reconcile this with the facts that the previous Henschel concert contained a long excerpt from the "Meistersinger," besides Schubert's B minor Symphony—and was poorly attended; that the two previous Hallé concerts, at which Schubert's great Symphony in C, Beethoven's Seventh Symphony and "Leonora" overture were given, were also poorly attended; and finally, that last Friday's concert, which was fairly well supported, contained only *one* Beethoven piece—the violin concerto—and *no* Wagner. These facts, it must be admitted, contradict in turn every theory that may be advanced, and it would have been our duty to inquire more carefully into their consequences had not Sir Charles put an end to all need for speculation. It is plain that in his opinion the improvement of last week was not likely to be maintained, and so he and his splendid band returns to the "benighted provinces," where they find the appreciation and support denied to them in the greatest and most enlightened city in the world. Leave us to our ballad concerts, Sir Charles; we are a musical nation.

The determination of Cambridge University to confer an honorary musical degree on Dvorák is one which does credit to the broad sympathies and taste of those who are responsible for such decisions. It indicates a praiseworthy readiness to recognise the fact that genius is not a matter of geography; and unquestionably the University is right in wishing to inscribe upon her roll of fame the name of the great Bohemian. There is, however, something to be said on the other side. Nowadays a musical degree is but an official acknowledgment that a man has studied the *technique* of his profession. It is right that such a man should receive full recognition of his learning and technical skill—for these are the only qualities necessary in the aspirant to a degree; but obviously it is something less than a fitting tribute to confer the same degree upon a man of genius. Probably Dvorák could not answer a fourth part of the questions put to the mediocrity who, having crammed himself with academic knowledge, answers the questions, writes an "exercise," and is then heard of no more except as the perpetrator of a feeble cantata and some church services. Would it not be more fitting that our Universities should devise some more distinctive method of indicating the men whom they delight to honour than this?

The sun shines, it is true, alike on the just and the unjust; but there is no need to confuse the musical genius with the ingenious musician. By all means let Cambridge ask Dvorák's permission to count him amongst her elect. She honours herself by so doing. But let her invent some higher title which, reserved only for men of genius or great talent (as opposed to mere learning), shall prevent the thoughtless from assuming that, because some men of genius are Doctors of Music, every Doctor of Music is a genius.

The recent death in Vienna of Cavaliere J. Pasquale Goldberg has scarcely been recorded by any of our contemporaries with the distinction demanded by the removal of a figure which, although unobtrusive, was by no means unimportant. He held until July last a professorship of singing at the Royal Academy of Music, to which he had been elected fourteen years previously. He had also had a considerable number of private pupils, by whom he was regarded with the greatest affection, for his sensitive and sympa-

thetic disposition made it impossible for him to deal otherwise than gently with even a dull pupil—though a dull pupil could hardly remain so long. As a composer his claims were not less solidly based, for his songs were often distinguished by much grace and charm, and found interpreters in Alboni and other famous artists. To the memory of so earnest a musician and so good a man these words are due.

Every one who believes in the efficacy of Art in the Home—and we all do now—should be interested to hear of the Exhibition of Art, Industry, and Invention which is being organised in connection with our contemporary, "Work," and which will be opened by Sir John Lubbock on December 29 at the Polytechnic Institute, Regent-street. This will—so say the promoters—be the first Exhibition ever held where the exhibits will be judged comparatively—that is to say, where any distinction will be made, taking into consideration the facilities of the exhibitor as amateur, apprentice, or journeyman; where his technical shortcomings as an amateur, his want of theoretical knowledge as an apprentice, and all other circumstances will be fairly weighed and due allowance made. It will also bring together an exceedingly interesting collection of articles made by professionals and amateurs, and will illustrate in a very marked manner how entirely a man's hobby may differ from the occupation in which he is engaged. Thus, a letter-carrier will send an exhibit in shoemaking, a weaving over-looker will contribute a medical coil and battery, a bookbinder's apprentice will forward a cabinet in fretwork, a member of the London Salvage Corps will exhibit a pair of netted curtains, tablecloth, and woollen shawl, a caretaker sends "The Charge of the Light Brigade" in coloured needlework, a seaman and dock labourer will send a working model locomotive, and a solicitor will send a banjo. All of which reads rather like a verse from "The Hunting of the Snark." Nevertheless, the object is a very desirable one, and we wish the Exhibition every success.

In an article contributed to the "Guide Musical" M. Maurice Kufferath reproduces two letters of Berlioz, which have only appeared hitherto in a little-known and now defunct periodical. One of these is sufficiently curious to deserve to be better known; it is addressed to Georges Kastner, to whom Berlioz afterwards presented the score of the work mentioned in the letter, the "Roméo et Juliette" symphony. It may be remarked that the date of the letter shows that the symphony was composed in 1839, and not in 1835, as given lately in the French papers:

9 septembre, 1839.

"J'étais dans l'ultimo fuoco de mon ultimo pezzo; je ne pensais à rien autre. De plus nous avons eu une de nos voisines dans la maison qui est devenue folle, qui a fait une peur atroce à ma femme, qui nous a forcé d'aller chercher un refuge hors de chez nous pendant deux jours; tout cela m'a fait perdre le souvenir de la réponse que je vous devais.....J'ai fini tout à fait la symphonie (1); fini, très fini, ce qui s'appelle fini. Plus une note à écrire. Amen, amen, amenissimen!!!!"

A musical missionary is wanted badly in Bayswater. From a recent issue of the "Paddington and Bayswater Express" we cull a few flowers of criticism which will indicate the level of musical taste in the district. The reference is, in the first place, to a concert given by Messrs. Frank and Algernon Lindo, and we do the writer no injustice in quoting sentences at random. They will be quite as intelligible as they are in the text:

"Mr. Algernon Lindo's piano solos were, on the whole, exemplary. He played a study called an Etude. . . . Mr. Frank Lindo made himself

in a scene from Richard III. It is not an easy matter to interpret our great poet, but all things considered, Mr. Lindo did wonders; his appreciation of the various moods of the King was something worth remembering. The concert in every way was a success and it is to be hoped that after some further study the Lindo brothers may over cloud their present reputation.

The following would appear to refer to the last Students' Concert of the R.C.M. :—

"It is very awkward not to know how to begin a notice of a concert. I want to talk about the Royal College of Music, but I hardly know how to begin. First, of all they are sure to be critical (the students I mean), and unforgiving to anyone who dares to say anything. However, I suppose it has to be risked. The "overture" (Euryanthe) was played not only for students, but for those who "profess" to play; Mr. Stainford, both in the managing and training of his orchestra, is much to be complimented. "Shelley's Ode," by Charles Wood, was in many parts fine, but some of the effects were commonplace and beneath him; he seemed occasionally to lapse into Wagnerism, but managed in the final to come back to Old England and her solidity. And poor Wagner!"

We make no attempt to adorn the naked beauty of these remarks!

A largely-attended meeting of representatives of the various trades interested in the question of American copyright was held at the offices of the London Chamber of Commerce on the 11th inst., Mr. R. K. Causton, M.P., presiding, to consider what action should be taken in connection with the American Copyright Bill. After discussion, in which Messrs. Edwin Ashdown, James Bowden (Ward, Lock, and Co.), W. C. Knight Clowes (William Clowes and Sons, Limited), C. J. Drummond (Secretary London Society of Compositors), R. W. Routledge (George Routledge and Sons, Limited), A. C. Trench (Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co.), and others took part, it was unanimously agreed that a committee, representative of all interests concerned, be appointed to consider the whole question, and report to a future meeting as to what steps they would propose should be taken. It was also suggested that the London Chamber should communicate again with the Board of Trade on the subject.

We have received the prospectus for the next series of Saturday concerts at the Crystal Palace, which commences on February 14. Amongst the works new to the Sydenham concert-room are to be noted: a dramatic overture by Miss Ellicott, an orchestral fantasia on "Carmen," Dr. Mackenzie's incidental music to "Ravenswood," Berlioz' ballad "La Mort d'Ophélie," some scenes from Grieg's music to Björnson's drama "Olav Trygvason," and Miss Dora Bright's pianoforte concerto to be played by the clever young pianist herself. The vocalists engaged include Miss Fanny Moody, Mdlle. Rosina Isidor, Madame Bertha Moore, Miss Thudichum, Miss Antoinette Trebelli, Madame Emily Squire, Mrs. Hutchinson, Mr. Charles Manners, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Barrington Foote, Mr. Andrew Black, and Mr. Norman Salmond. Madame Neruda, M. Ysaye, Dr. Joachim, Master Gerardy, Miss Dora Bright, Hr. Stavenhagen, Mr. Marmaduke Barton, and Mr. Frederic Lamond are the instrumentalists. So there need be no apprehension lest the next series should fall from the high level hitherto maintained by Mr. Manns' concerts.

Mr. Daniel Mayer has been recently to Berlin in search of new lions. He has found one in the person of the tenor Mierszowski, by whose phenomenal voice and style he was so impressed that he at once concluded a contract by which the singer will appear next season in London. We shall be curious to hear an artist of whom report speaks so highly. Mr. Mayer is also in treaty with Madame Sembrich, who may possibly revisit us during the opera season.

Signor Dimitresco and his wife, Madame Louise Lablache, have, through Mr. Daniel Mayer, entered upon an engagement for two years with the Carl Rosa Opera Company.

If a strong cast can ensure success, Sir Arthur Sullivan's new opera, "Ivanhoe," will certainly be successful. Mr. Franklin Clive is the latest recruit to the company, this admirable artist having been engaged to play the part of Richard I. for at least three nights weekly. We congratulate Sir Arthur not less than Mr. Clive.

At the moment of going to press we receive a copy of Oliver Wendell Holmes's new book, "Over the Tea-Cups." We shall hope to give some account next week of this latest product of the "Autocrat's" delightful pen.

Mr. Arthur Friedheim will return to London next month to conduct the orchestral concerts to be given by Mr. Stavenhagen.

PRODUCTION OF BERLIOZ' "LES TROYENS" AT CARLSRUHE.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

(Continued from page 986.)

The closing scene of the first evening—the lurid flames of the burning city, and the band of women who at the instigation of Cassandra sought death rather than be exposed to dishonour—haunts the memory long after the curtain has fallen. "Les Troyens à Carthage" opens with bright, bustling music, and with a song of praise to Dido, strong in its simplicity: Troy was, but Carthage is at the height of its prosperity. The contrast is a sharp one, even at a day's interval. Before the Queen appear builders, sailors, and labourers, and to each company a suitable gift is offered: the three short instrumental movements accompanying each are characteristic of Berlioz, both in the music and in the orchestration. The first recalls the "Dance of Will-o'-the-Wisps" in "Faust." The Carthaginians once more sing their hymn of praise and withdraw. The scene which follows between the Queen and Sister Anna is in many ways remarkable. The music with its charm and lightness befits a "reine adorée," while those short wistful phrases for violins, those moving semiquaver figures, those sighs from wind instruments tell of inward agitation. The subjective as well as the objective is here well expressed. The Queen, though apparently without cause, is sad. Melodious but elegant is the closing *Andantino* in which the two voices effectively combine. Anna has guessed the cause of her sister's sadness: in the midst of all her glory she feels lonely. But Iopas, the Tyrian Court poet, announces the arrival of shipwrecked mariners. Dido had herself been exposed to the fury of the ocean when she fled from Tyre, and she feels pity for the men: here again the music is most expressive, and it presents two features which indeed are to be found throughout the work, and which enable one to listen to it without fatigue. The one is the immense rhythmic variety, the other a quaint simplicity; the artist's temperament will explain the former, and his adoration of Gluck to some extent the latter. This simplicity reveals itself in many ways; it is sometimes in the form of the phrase or melody, sometimes in the harmonies, and sometimes even in the absence of harmony. Berlioz might in the matter of simplicity be called the Gluck of the nineteenth century; in other things he manifests individuality of the strongest kind. Before Æneas (disguised) his son and a few trusty Trojans enter, the sound of the March is heard, that fatal March to the sounds of which the engine of destruction and death entered Troy. In his "Symphonie Fantastique" Berlioz vulgarizes a melody: here he turns joy into mourning. The theme heard in the "Prise de Troie" in the bright key of B flat, appears here in the dull key of B flat minor—*dans un mode triste*, writes the composer in his score: the effect is very weird. Ascanius offers presents to the Queen, among which the crown of Hecuba and the veil of Helena. Dido replies, but her quiet, pensive strains are suddenly interrupted. Terrible news is announced: the savage Iarbas is threatening the kingdom: the

people are shouting for arms. Æneas reveals himself, and places his sword at Dido's disposal: Tyrian and Trojan are to unite against the Queen's foes; the father embraces his son and departs. While all this is going on there are some fine passages in the music: particularly the energetic closing chorus. The composer has placed his famous "Chasse Royale" next, but at Carlsruhe it was appropriately given at a later period. The return of Æneas from the war in which he has proved victorious gives the composer occasion for a ballet: a *fête* is held in honour of the Trojan. The short introductory symphony founded on the Carthaginian hymn is effectively orchestrated: the ballet music is graceful, though not particularly striking. Then follows a dance of Nubian female slaves and an air sung by the Court poet. But nothing can give pleasure to the Queen, who can think only of the hero; and she puts a sudden end to the poet's tender song. The music of the ballet and of the song remind one of ordinary opera, and in spite of some clever things in this festival music the spectator is not vexed when Queen Dido orders the singer to cease. The evening opened with a festival to celebrate the success of commerce and agriculture, and now we have one for the success of the war: all this stops the action of the drama. Were the whole work played in one evening, as the composer intended, cuts could be easily made in both scenes: Berlioz has, in fact, indicated some for the first. The remainder of this act consists of a Quintet, Septet, and Love Duet. The first is sung by Dido and her sister, Æneas, Iopas, and Narbal, the Queen's Minister; and the music is remarkable for its beauty and power of characterisation. The Septet is a gem of the first water: the Duet is tender and pleasing, but it is long, and its sameness wearies. At Carlsruhe the quality and balance of voices in the former were not all that could be desired: the effect of the Septet with an ideal rendering would be immense. The closing bars for orchestra in this act, after the apparition of Mercury, are most dramatic: the tonality is striking, for the long duet is in G flat, and then, after an enharmonic modulation to the key of D, seven bars later, there is another one to that of E minor, when the tonic chord is given out by the full force of the orchestra. The "Chasse Royale" may have been suggested by Weber, but it is Berlioz to the core. It is one of the most powerful examples of tone-painting. The opening section is as delicate as it is fanciful, and the lovely Naiad melody falls soothingly on one's ear. It is, of course, quite impossible to describe the storm music: it can merely be said that it is perfectly original, and that the orchestration is wonderful even for Berlioz. The quiet coda in which the "Naiad" theme reappears brings the movement to a worthy close. The only vocal sounds on the stage are wild cries of Fauns and Satyrs. Berlioz desired that this piece should be omitted if the stage effects could not be presented on a grand scale. At Carlsruhe this was not the case, and moreover the orchestra, though composed of excellent players and under the most skilful direction, was not powerful enough in the matter of strings to give to the music all its force and meaning. But all present gladly excused all shortcomings: it was a great thing to hear it at all.

In the next act the ships are seen in Carthage harbour. The young sailor Hylas, dreaming of his far-off home, sings a plaintive song. Then comes an agitated movement: the chiefs are preparing for departure. After a clever little duet, with quaint orchestration, between two soldiers, Æneas appears upon the scene. He is in anguish at the thought of leaving Dido. Some of the music is powerful, though on the whole it is disappointing. The spectres of Cassandra, Hector, Cherebus, and Priam appear before him, but here again neither the dramatic nor the musical interest is great. There is more power in the parting scene between the Queen and the hero, if Æneas may be called such.

In the last act the scene with Dido and her sister contains pathetic music, and it is worked up to an exciting climax until voices are heard proclaiming the departure of the Trojans: from this moment almost to the close of the work Berlioz gives himself up once more entirely to the dramatic situation. The passion of the Queen is finely expressed, and her despair when she recognises the powerlessness of that passion: in this recitative there is much to remind one of Gluck. The next scene, in which she turns her mind to death and bids farewell to the proud city, is one of the most striking numbers of the whole work: form, tone, colour—everything seems to combine to produce one grand, deep impression. And the stately funeral hymn, sung by the priests of Pluto, how solemn its sounds, and how gloomy is the effect of that accompaniment with pizzicato notes from the double-basses mingled with drum-beats. Then the music becomes intensely

dramatic as Dido ascends the funeral pyre; every note in the orchestra, as with Wagner, seems to have meaning. And, speaking of Wagner, there is here a phrase for basses which bears a striking resemblance to one near the end of the "Walküre" when Wotan calls on Loge. But Dido in the moment of death foretells that Carthage will perish. A vision of the Roman capital is seen at the back of the stage, and the sounds of the Trojan March are heard. This close seems somewhat melodramatic, but thirty years ago it may have appeared to the Parisian public a satisfactory close.

With regard to the performance of the second part, we have as with the first part to bestow special praise on the lady who took the chief rôle. Fräulein Mailhac, as Queen Dido, sang well and acted with becoming dignity: she was very fine in the last act. Mention might also be made of Fräulein Friedlein (Anna), who was highly efficient. The whole work had evidently been prepared with the greatest care, and it must be acknowledged that if the stage effects were not always very satisfactory they were often highly impressive. Capellmeister Motl is a gifted conductor, and with him the preparation of the work was evidently a labour of love. He is not only intelligent, but he is able to communicate his enthusiasm to the members of the orchestra. Except under Herr Richter I have never heard such vigorous fortes or such delicate pianos. Strings and wind were admirable, and the former only needed to be more numerous to bring out the effects of the score more strikingly. Capellmeister Motl has double reason to be proud of the work which he has accomplished. He has done justice to the memory of Berlioz by producing "Les Troyens," which seemed in danger of being altogether forgotten; and besides, he has made known a work of great historical interest and of immense artistic value. Berlioz has long been recognised as a genius, but in "Les Troyens" we have his ripest thought and his richest workmanship. Will the production of the work at Carlsruhe lead to its performance in some of the capitals of Europe? Will Paris take any notice of it, or London? They ought to, for in both these cities the master, once despised, is held in honour.

MUSICAL ASSOCIATION.

At the fourth meeting of this society on Tuesday evening last Mr. Frederic Penna read a suggestive paper entitled "Further thoughts about singing." Mr. Penna, who confined his remarks to the emotional side of the art, said that as vocal music was a union between harmony and poetry expression in its delivery was of primary importance. Singing was musical oratory, and therefore the clear pronunciation and correct accent of the words were an absolute necessity, without which it was impossible the music could exercise its due effect. A singer should be first of all a good elocutionist. There was a general idea that music had a definite language of its own, but this was not so. Abstract music could only appeal to the emotions. If the intellect was exercised it was by reason of association with words or definite ideas. He assumed every phrase in a good composition had a meaning, and it was the duty of the vocalist to study this before becoming its exponent. The interpreter's first effort should be to identify himself with the character he represented, and then by study of the composer's methods to illustrate the manner in which that composer would express the idiosyncracies of that character. It was in this transference of the composer's feelings to themselves that so many artists failed. The lecturer then dwelt on the principles of dramatic and lyrical expression, on the importance of holding back the breath in the resolution of a discord, and the need of accent on dissonant notes. Speaking of church music, the lecturer said that music of a diatonic character was more suitable to worship than that of a chromatic kind, because the former was more expressive of repose owing to the greater number of concords it contained, and the directness and simplicity of the dissonances employed. Chromatic music was the language of passion, and therefore was more suitable to the stage and platform. The colour of vocal tone should correspond with the sentiment of the text, with which also the gestures of the singer should also accord. Artistic singing was only truthful singing. Our vocalists were accused of being cold and unemotional, but phlegmaticism was largely a matter of education. If young vocalists were taught to suppress their feelings it was not surprising if their singing lacked warmth. Fashionable audiences were also provocative of a cold style. Artistic fervour and earnestness were chilled by an audience who pronounced everything "charming." Affectation

was a disease which was catching. Playing with the fringes of art did not encourage its growth. In oratorio singing the sublimity of the words should be thoroughly grasped before vocalization was attempted. Unless this were done there was small chance of the text receiving its due inflection; but when the truth and deep significance of the words were grasped the singer would feel he was the exponent of something more than artistic phrases—that he had a mission. This high moral view in oratorio was much lost sight of, the result being that the music often failed to exercise the elevating influence it would otherwise exert. Singers should remember that their knowledge of art was only in proportion to the power of their mental perception. Translations were usually valueless, artistically, but there was much excuse for them from the extreme difficulty of the work. It was of first importance that the words selected should express the exact shade of meaning of the original, and this was often impossible to secure with their correct accent in the music. It was a mistake to transpose songs, as the relative ratios of the notes were thereby altered, and the meaning of the composer—supposing he had one—interfered with. Composers were often to blame for their careless accentuation of the words. He had seen a proposition set to a dominant thirteenth. (William Cobbett once said “Do not sit down pen in hand to think what you shall write, but sit down to write what you have already thought.”) In conclusion Mr. Penna addressed a few remarks to students, and commented on the serious mistake which many made in coming before the public as artists after too brief a course of study. Inefficient teaching was sowing the seeds of bad art. It was something external to art that brought in eight hundred pounds a night. If they would attain the first ranks of their profession they must labour mentally as well as physically to acquire perfect command of their beautiful art, and they must aim at an ideal conception which could be understood.

During the discussion which ensued Mr. H. C. Bannister, who occupied the chair, observed that he thought the carelessness with which the words were often accented was fostered by our hymn singing. It was very rarely that the tune which appropriately accented the words in one verse did so in the others. As an example he might mention the favourite hymn “Abide with me,” in which the accents varied in each verse. The want of earnestness on the part of vocalists was often apparent, but it must be remembered that it was only of late years that a singer was synonymous with a musician. Mr. William Cobbett had also made another valuable remark, viz., we should take care to express ourselves not only that we could be understood, but that we could not be misunderstood. Inefficient performances were greatly owing to vocalists taking a few so-called “finishing lessons” from a teacher of reputation. Mr. Lacy held that as in songs the part of the music was to heighten the effect of the words, the latter should receive the greatest attention, and should be recited before they were vocalised. As to artistic success, it was defined in an old volume he had recently come across as “a commercial failure.” Dr. Hubert Parry said he so fully concurred with the spirit of Mr. Penna’s paper that he had little to say beyond expressing his regret that it had not been delivered before a larger audience, and especially one in which many vocalists were present. He thought that the cause of the prevalence of bad art was the want of public perception, but that it was to be hoped that this would be dispelled by the efforts of conscientious and earnest musicians. Mr. Brown thought Mr. Penna had been a little hard on translators considering the difficulties they had to contend with and the very inadequate pecuniary recompense they generally received. Mr. Southgate agreed with Mr. Brown, and also deprecated the practice of employing foreign vocalists whose knowledge and pronunciation of our language were alike imperfect. Mr. Taylor thought a good deal of our church music required re-editing with regard to the accentuation of the words. Mr. Gilbert Webb said he thought transposition of a tone or half tone was often a decided gain. A good composer considered the extent of the registers of the voice he wrote for, and as these varied in different voices of the same quality it was obvious the composer’s intentions were often more fully realised by judicious transposition. If singing masters of repute would refuse to give less, say, than twelve lessons, many of the evils resulting from inefficient training would be cured.

It is the misfortune of the imitator that he only appropriates the conspicuous, and—through natural nervousness—lacks the courage to imitate the really beautiful of the original.—Goethe.

The Organ World.

ADVENT SERVICES.

One of the most satisfactory signs of the times to the musician is the number of churches in which performances of oratorio are now given during Advent and Lent. The most favoured work this Advent, as on previous like seasons, has been Spohr’s “Last Judgment,” the rendering of which in the majority of instances reflects great credit on the artistic abilities and enterprise of organists and church choirs. The former especially deserve commendation from the fact that in many instances their praiseworthy efforts do not meet with the congregational support and encouragement which they deserve and might reasonably be expected to receive. On a recent occasion after an admirable performance of this oratorio in a well known London church the offertory on which the organist entirely depended to defray all expenses amounted to £2 12s. Out of this amount he had to pay two soloists, find the music, print the congregational papers, and defray other incidental expenses. Thus not only do these performances frequently result in pecuniary loss to the promoter but he receives no compensation beyond the satisfaction of a conscientious artist for the hours necessarily devoted to laborious rehearsals.

Doubtless the good old-fashioned but narrow view that a church is “a place for prayer and preaching” still causes the absence of many people on these occasions; but account must also be taken of other influences, foremost among which is the frequency with which certain oratorios are performed. Congregations do not tire of a hymn tune because they take part in it, and generally, too, it is suggestive of associations which often go back to earliest childhood. In other words, the mind is not chiefly exercised in following the music. In listening to music, however, the reverse is the case, the critical faculty is naturally aroused; and although familiarity with a truly great work increases our admiration and its fascinating influence, still there is a point at which repetition loses its attractive charm and even becomes tiresome. The music of the “Last Judgment” is full of melody and pathetic grace, but it must be admitted that it often fails to meet the great demands of the text; and familiarity with the work unfortunately serves but to impress this fact. Its orchestral symphonies and accompaniments are of a kind, which even with the greatest study and observance of the score, it is almost impossible to satisfactorily reproduce on the organ alone, while many of its melodies are more suggestive of the concert-room than the church. Organists would do well therefore to enlarge their *répertoires*, and let other works be heard which in some cases might be more within the means at command; for although it may not be altogether pleasant for the musician to admit, it is a fact that congregations are attracted more by the excellence of performance than the celebrity of the composer.

There is reason to believe that there is an opening for church cantatas written especially with regard to the churches, seasons, and congregational requirements, i.e., containing numbers in which the congregation could take part, and furnished with interludes and accompaniments expressly written for the ordinary modern organ. The capability of a congregation to vocally participate in the performance of oratorio is much underrated. Properly treated they may be depended on to produce fine and artistic effects. At the performances of the Passion Music at St. Anne’s, Wells-street, the congregation are asked to join in the singing of the chorales, which they do with remarkable care and attention to the conductor’s *bâton* and with enormous gain in artistic results. There are many ways in which the voices of a large congregation could be effectively utilised in a musical work which, apart from the increased moral influence it would thus exert, would excite and sustain the attention of a congregation far more than the praiseworthy but often necessarily inadequate performance of a great oratorio.

NOTES.

The annual performances of Spohr’s “Last Judgment” were commenced at St. Peter’s, Eaton-square, on the 5th inst., and on that occasion attracted a numerous congregation, very many of whom it was interesting to observe came provided with the score of the work. Mr. Manby Sergison, the organist of this church, is fortunate in his soloists, though as in most

other cases the good fortune is traceable to the previous efforts of the recipient. In this case not only the choir, but also that of the solo vocalists, with the exception of Mr. Harper Kearton, who sang in the place of Mr. Gregory Hast, unavoidably absent, owe their admirable training to Mr. Sergison. Owing to the consequent sympathy existing between the singers and himself, and perhaps out of consideration of the prejudices of those who object to anything which approaches a performance in church, and who associate the idea with the waving of a *bâton*, Mr. Sergison dispenses with a conductor, and trusts his forces to follow his organ accompaniments. Doubtless a choir so trained, and who are accustomed week after week to sing to the accompaniments of the same man, get to know his methods and style, but it is questionable if the procedure is a wise one in so elaborate and extended a work as "The Last Judgment;" there were, however, several points of great musicianly excellence in the performance, which was repeated on the 18th inst.

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Mr. John E. Jeffries, F.C.O., organist of St Matthew's, Walsall, gave an organ recital in his church on Tuesday, the 9th inst. Judging from the programme Mr. Jeffries is an ardent Wagnerite, the recital including the March from "Rienzi," selection from the Wedding Music "Lohengrin," the "Prize Song" from the "Meistersinger" and March from "Tannhäuser." Legitimate organ music was, however, well represented by C. M. Widor's sixth Organ Symphony in G minor, a work which is unknown to the majority of English organists. The music at Walsall Parish Church is evidently well up to date.

M. MAUREL'S LECTURE.

We commence this week the reproduction of the lecture delivered last week on the Lyceum stage by M. Maurel, which seems to us well worthy of such preservation. It need only be said here that the audience comprised many prominent members of the musical and dramatic professions, who followed the lecture with obvious sympathy and appreciation.

MESDAMES, MESSIEURS,

Puisque vous avez bien voulu encourager par votre présence le désir que j'avais d'exposer les difficultés de l'art lyrique moderne, laissez-moi d'abord vous dire que je compte me renfermer ici dans des aperçus strictement impersonnels. En conséquence, je vous prie de faire abstraction totale de ma personnalité et de ne voir pour l'instant en moi que le porte-parole d'idées artistiques qui ont intéressé les hommes de tout temps, puisque de tout temps la musique et le chant furent en honneur parmi eux.

Cependant, avant d'aller plus loin, je tiens à remercier en quelques paroles de gratitude profonde le galant homme qui, avec une courtoisie parfaite a bien voulu nous donner l'hospitalité. Cet homme,—ce gentilhomme dirais-je—a porté si haut parmi vous l'éclat de la profession d'artiste dramatique qu'il ne peut plus rien lui être offert en hommage au-dessus de ce qu'il possède déjà—je veux parler de l'admiration et de l'estime de tous ses compatriotes. Comme les véritables artistes s'intéressent toujours et en toute occasion à ce qui touche l'art, sous quelque forme que celui-ci se manifeste devant eux, M. Irving, avec un sentiment de confraternité artistique d'une noblesse vraiment exceptionnelle, a tenu à patronner de toute l'autorité de son nom cette conférence sur la branche de l'art la plus voisine de la sienne,—le drame lyrique. Il a deviné l'importance qu'il y avait à faire ressortir le lien étroit qui unit le drame parlé au drame chanté, puisque dans l'évolution musicale actuelle, paroles et musique ont pour mission de concourir ensemble à l'expression d'une seule et même grand idée—celle de l'humanité sous ses aspects les plus divers.

Nos explications doivent envisager dans l'art lyrique un double point de vue : le point de vue *théorique* et le point de vue *pratique*. Dans l'un, nous chercherons à dégager la *philosophie* générale de cet art considéré en lui-même; dans l'autre, nous chercherons à déterminer les conditions d'une bonne interprétation lyrique.

Mesdames, Messieurs, l'art lyrique a atteint de tels développements dans la seconde partie de ce siècle qu'il ne peut être que du plus vif intérêt, pour tous ceux qui suivent de près ce mouvement, de chercher quelle doit en être la valeur *philosophique*. Cette valeur se dégagerait tout naturellement d'une comparaison raisonnée des diverses phases de cet art. Mais, pour ne pas remonter ici à des époques trop éloignées, examinons simplement les

deux genres en présence, c'est-à-dire le *drame lyrique*, et l'*opéra lyrique* qui l'a immédiatement précédé.

D'abord, qu'est-ce que l'*opéra lyrique*? Une production dérivée de la Renaissance, semblable à toutes les productions dérivées de cette époque dans le théâtre tant parlé que chanté, en un mot, dans la majorité des ouvrages, quelque chose de fictif et de conventionnel.

En effet, la Renaissance, à laquelle nous devons d'avoir fécondé la stérilité du Moyen-Âge, en s'appuyant sur les arts et les lettres antiques, fit une œuvre plus belle que vraie, et surtout plus brillante que durable. Après la chute de la civilisation antique, l'Europe fut plongée, vous le savez, dans une barbarie profonde, dans une période d'insécurité absolue, de luttes et d'abus de force, d'intolérance étroite; bref, dans un état social où, à l'exception presque complète des artistes et des écrivains, il n'y eut vraiment de place que pour des guerriers et des moines. Lorsque, chassés par l'invasion turque, les savants byzantins vinrent apporter à l'Italie les trésors de la littérature antique, jusque là oubliés au fond des bibliothèques de Constantinople, ce fut, certes, un jet de lumière. qui, partant de cette terre bénie de tous les arts, remonta graduellement, jusqu'aux coins les plus éloignés de l'Europe. Dans tous les pays, les pères de la Renaissance furent de grandes figures, et particulièrement en ce qui concerne la Renaissance littéraire; ils eurent une largeur de vues et une puissance d'expression d'autant plus grande qu'ils ne se trouvaient gênés par aucune tradition antérieure dans cette littérature dont ils étaient les premiers représentants. Ces hommes, qui s'appelaient Torquato Tasso en Italie, Rabelais en France, Erasme en Hollande, Shakespeare en Angleterre, jetèrent dans des conceptions originales et grandioses tout le feu de leur fantaisie, et les sentiments qu'ils dépeignirent sont profondément vrais, car tout génie, placé sur un terrain vierge où il n'est entravé par aucun lien conventionnel, tendra irrésistiblement vers la vérité.

Cependant cette tendance ne put pas se maintenir. L'état de société du Moyen Âge, germanique et féodal, sur lequel on avait essayé d'implanter la culture antique, n'était pas propre à assimiler cette culture et ne tarda pas à en méconnaître l'esprit. Au lieu d'emprunter aux anciens la peinture large et simple de choses vraies qui éclate dans leurs écrits on ne s'attacha bientôt qu'à copier la perfection des formes antiques, en négligeant de les mettre en harmonie avec la vérité de la nature. Au bout de quelques générations à peine, les disciples des promoteurs de la Renaissance, en arrivèrent à ne plus garder de la culture classique que des formes obligatoires, mais toutes fictives et conventionnelles, que l'on adaptait alors aux besoins d'une civilisation déjà plus raffinée.

Ainsi, d'une part, dans l'ancien théâtre parlé, dans la tragédie classique des XVII^e. et XVIII^e. siècles, vous savez que, sauf de rares exceptions, et, bien entendu votre immortel Shakespeare, les auteurs eurent pour objectif non pas de représenter les diverses complications que nous offre la vie humaine, mais de faire paraître sur la scène des personnages de distinction, rois, princesses, héros, se disant des choses polies dans des vers nobles et harmonieux. Quant à la vérité historique (et psychologique, quant à l'observation des caractères et des situations, la plupart des auteurs ne daignaient pas s'en préoccuper. De même, dans le théâtre chanté, les compositeurs ont subi cette influence du goût de leur époque, en dépensant leur imagination, si souvent inspirée et féconde, à greffer une musique agréable sur les agréables vers du librettiste, sans se soucier plus que ce dernier de l'importance de la vérité. L'*opéra lyrique*, il faut donc le constater, sauf les œuvres maîtresses de quelques grandes exceptions, ne s'est jamais complètement dégagé des formes conventionnelles dans lesquelles il fut enlacé dès sa naissance, et, offrant de ce fait plus d'agrément que de vérité, ne peut plus suffire aux besoins de notre époque de progrès.

Par contre, qu'est-ce que le *drame lyrique*? Un produit de l'évolution moderne de l'esprit humain vers la vérité. Dans le théâtre chanté comme dans le théâtre parlé, le *drame* a été une réaction contre le fictif et le conventionnel. Les situations d'un drame ne sont évidemment jamais banales, car alors elles ne pourraient ni intéresser, ni émouvoir le public, mais on les fait se dérouler dans le décor ordinaire et vrai de la vie, c'est à dire dans un palais tout aussi bien que dans une chaumière. Chacun des personnages qui y interviennent a pour obligation d'y apporter les sentiments de son caractère, le langage de sa condition sociale, les mœurs de son époque.

Mais si c'est là l'idée qu'il faut se faire du *drame* simplement parlé, combien plus compliquée est encore la conception du *drame lyrique*! Dans celui-ci, d'une part, le libretto doit réunir toutes les qualités littéraires d'une œuvre dramatique, bien qu'il soit tenu à des proportions plus

resserrées. D'autre part, la musique, tout en recherchant l'harmonie, doit suivre et soutenir toutes les nuances des caractères, toutes les péripéties de l'action, tous les soubresauts du drame, et doit surtout expliquer par le dessin des mélodies le tempérament de chaque personnage.

En faisant cela, la musique ne traduit pas seulement l'impression provoqué sur l'âme du compositeur par l'action du libretto, elle fixe aussi la manière dont cette action doit être comprise et elle complète enfin l'idée en ajoutant à la puissance des paroles cette voix parlant directement aux sens, cet indéfinissable au delà qu'elle renferme en elle-même.

Votre immortel poète Shakespeare a dit que le théâtre doit être le miroir de la nature. Rien ne saurait mieux que cette définition résumer la valeur philosophique du drame, et particulièrement du drame lyrique, où les deux langues, la parole et la musique, concourent ensemble à l'expression de l'idée la plus vraie de l'humanité.

Étant donné l'idée philosophique représentée par le drame lyrique, on comprend avec quelles difficultés les compositeurs y sont aux prises. On n'aura donc pas de peine à se rendre compte des difficultés qu'ont à y combattre les interprètes. C'est cet examen des difficultés pratiques d'interprétation que nous allons aborder maintenant.

La pratique de l'art lyrique, c'est-à-dire son esthétique appliquée, se compose de trois éléments : la technique, la psychologie, la scénographie.

La technique a pour but d'apprendre à chanter ; la psychologie de faire comprendre ce que l'on chante ; la scénographie de donner l'illusion de la couleur locale dans laquelle on doit chanter.

Pour chanter, la technique est évidemment indispensable, car sans un entraînement vocal sérieux on ne doit pas espérer devenir un chanteur digne de ce nom. Mais c'est la psychologie que gouverne l'ensemble de toute interprétation, puisque ce n'est que par elle que nous pouvons connaître exactement le caractère d'un personnage, la couleur de voix qui doit lui convenir et les attitudes qu'il doit prendre, en raison de l'époque, du lieu et de la condition où il se trouve.

Examinons donc les difficultés inhérentes à ces trois parties de l'esthétique appliquée, en commençant par la technique.

Dans la technique, quelles qualités doit réunir l'organe d'un interprète du drame lyrique ? D'abord et simplement une voix sans déféctuosité marquée ayant une étendue naturelle suffisante, homogène en un mot dans l'ensemble de son parcours ; et non pas, comme on pourrait le supposer un organe exceptionnel par la puissance ou le charme. Or, c'est là le cas qui se rencontre le plus fréquemment, car si l'art lyrique ne devait être l'apanage que de quelques oiseaux rares, il serait inutile de construire des théâtres, d'ouvrir des conservatoires et d'écrire des chefs d'œuvre tels que ceux qui existent dans l'art musical.

Donc, étant donné un de ces organes moyens, — que nous prenons ici comme type d'étude, — quelle doit être la première des qualités à acquérir pour devenir un bon interprète ? C'est la possession absolue de cette sonorité médiane, nommée par les Italiens la "mezza-gola" ; c'est-à-dire la possibilité de donner à volonté une sonorité suffisante pour être parfaitement entendue dans une grande salle, sans recourir au moindre effort.

C'est sur cette "mezza-gola," devant servir à l'interprétation des situations normales, que doivent venir se détacher toutes les variations de coloris et de force nécessaires à l'interprétation des situations extraordinaires, et c'est grâce à elle que l'auditeur peut être immédiatement touché par les moindres variations qui se produisent sur cette sonorité moyenne et calme sous l'influence des complications du drame. De même, dans la vie humaine c'est d'après l'état de tranquillité normale chez l'homme que nous pouvons apprécier à quel point il est impressionné par les orages de la vie. C'est donc à notre avis la possession complète de cette sonorité médiane qui doit former l'objectif essentiel des études vocales.

Cette qualité obtenue, l'interprète peut se dire qu'il possède l'art du chant, car, pour l'obtenir, il a dû plier son organe à des exercices pratiques d'une valeur réelle qui le mettent seulement alors en état de triompher de toutes les exigences d'une interprétation lyrique vraie.

La preuve que cette sonorité moyenne est la condition sine qua non de l'art du chant, c'est que les chanteurs qui ne la posséderaient pas ne sauraient être de sérieux interprètes du drame lyrique, car, incapables de baser leur exécution vocale sur cette sonorité normale, ils devraient recourir à l'effort pour exprimer les situations simples et ne seraient plus de ce fait, en mesure de satisfaire aux exigences des situations plus agitées, qui, elles, demandent de réelles dépenses de forces.

En vous disant que l'interprète doit former sa voix par des exercices pratiques variés, je ne vous apprend rien de bien nouveau, car dans tous les pays du monde d'innombrables méthodes de chant ont dû le jour à ce

fait. Elles sont en nombre tellement infinies qu'il serait impossible d'aborder ici la comparaison de leurs mérites respectifs.

Quant à vous développer en ce moment les lois scientifiques sur lesquelles il faudrait s'appuyer dans cette étude, cette démonstration nous entraînerait forcément dans de tels détails que le cadre restreint de cette conférence ne pourrait y suffire. Mais ces points se trouveront traités avec tout le développement qui leur est nécessaire dans un ouvrage où j'exposerais prochainement mes recherches sur ces différentes questions.

Toutefois, j'aurai l'honneur de vous donner tantôt des exemples pratiques des résultats que ces recherches m'ont fait obtenir.

(To be continued.) p 1019

LECTURE ON DANTE BY COUNT FERRERO, LL.D.

On Saturday, in the St. James's Hall, before an audience which filled the banqueting room, Count Ferrero, LL.D., of the University of Turin, delivered in Italian a lecture on Dante, which, we believe, is the most important of its kind ever given in this country. The lecturer prefaced his remarks on the "Divina Commedia" by a sketch of the great poet's life and earlier works. As he approached the subject of his lecture Count Ferrero developed the theory that Dante, in writing the "Divina Commedia," presented to us three phases of human existence, and intended chiefly to show by allegory that the life of sin as lived here on earth is subject to the torments of a guilty conscience, and unable to grasp the great happiness of the intellectual and higher moral life.

An entirely novel feature was the introduction of musical illustrations of some portions of the "Inferno." There were two quartettes composed by the Rev. Canon Harford, which, while possessing considerable merit, suffered from insufficient rehearsal. The weird effect of nine bass voices uttering lower E flat in unison during three bars, on the dread words "Voi ch' entrate," at the end of the Hell-Gate chorus, was indescribably terrible, and such a peculiar attempt at portraying eternal punishment has probably never before been attempted in vocal music. The Cavalier Gabrielli was the composer of the latter portions of the music, which, however pleasant, would be pronounced by all judges unsuited to the solemnity of the subject. The principal soprano was Signorina Ponti, whose charming voice and singing were highly applauded. The metrical rendering of the Fifth Canto of the "Inferno" by the Rev. Canon Harford was then read by the translator in such a manner as to carry to the hearts of his hearers the majestic beauty of this Canto, and more particularly the marvellous pathos of the episode of Francesca da Rimini and her lover Paolo.

Count Ferrero was further assisted by Mr. Philip Wicksteed, M.A., and Mr. Churton Collins, M.A., both of whom made eloquent and interesting speeches, the former pointing out the triple religious meaning respecting sin, penitence, and blissful communion with God shadowed forth in this poem ; the latter showing very clearly the influence of Dante upon our English poets, which he contended was most marked in Chaucer, Lydgate, Sackville, Milton, Gray, and Tennyson. A vote of thanks to the Count and a short reply from that nobleman concluded the proceedings, which were unquestionably a great success.

We should mention that besides the bust of Dante there were exhibited the original drawings by Gustave Doré illustrating the "Story of Rimini," and the rare editions of "La Divina Commedia" by Christoforo Landino and Aldus, the former printed at Florence in 1485, and containing the first copper-plates ever printed in a book, the second at Venice in 1515. These were lent by Canon Harford ; and Mr. Henry Doetsch kindly granted the loan of Dante's portrait, painted by Andrea del Sarto.

But for illness and the severe weather H.H. Prince L. Lucien Bonaparte would have presided at this lecture, which was graced by several notables in the literary world ; H.E. Cardinal Manning being represented by his Principal Chaplain the Very Rev. Dr. Johnson. Several distinguished Americans were present ; the Hon. John R. Thomas (one of the foremost chiefs of Congress) and Mrs. Thomas, General Roddey of Tuscaloosa, Mr. and Mrs. Gibb of Orangefontaine, and Mrs. Roller ; on the other hand no leader in the fashionable London world and no prominent clergy of the English Church were among the audience. Possibly such absence may be accounted for by Count Ferrero delivering his lecture in Italian as much as by non-appreciation on the part of our English aristocracy of the unrivalled work of the Poet of Florence.

The Dramatic World.

"EMPEROR AND GALILEAN."

LONDON. WEDNESDAY, 17TH DECEMBER, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDMUSE,—

I am doubly lucky this week. It happens seldom enough that when I have no theatre about which to write to you I have yet a wonderful play to write about: and it is naturally far seldomer that this conjunction of circumstances comes about in weather when no possible theatre in Strand or Haymarket could tempt one from the cosy playhouse whose lights twinkle in the study-fire. To-night the snow is lying in the street without, and the carts bearing Christmas cheer pass noiselessly, their red lamps glimmering through a haze which was dense fog but yesterday; and the theatres of central London are very cold, very cheerless, and for the most part very empty. Moreover, they wisely refrain from producing novelties till this wintry weather shall have amended itself.

And on this night of all others I have an admission to see a "World-Historic Drama," on the only stage vast enough for it: which is the stage of the T. R. Study-fire, before spoken of, while the play is the "Emperor and Galilean" (Kjæiser og Galilæer) of Henrik Ibsen—a play founded on the history of Julian the Apostate. This, the first translated of all Ibsen's works—for Miss Catherine Ray published her version in 1876—now takes its place as Volume IV. of Mr. William Archer's edition of Ibsen's Prose Dramas.

Unlike the rest of its author's prose works, this is distinctly a play for the study and not for the stage. Its two parts contain ten very long acts, and in these acts appear some sixty named characters, besides "Soldiers, churchgoers, heathen onlookers, courtiers, priests, students, dancing-girls, servants, attendants on the Quæstor, Gallic warriors: Visions and voices," in Part I. alone, and very many more people in Part II. It strikes one, indeed, that throughout "Cæsar's Apostacy"—as Ibsen calls the first portion of his "World-History"—the author to some extent kept the actual stage in view. Each act is contained in one scene—as is usual with Ibsen—and the spectacular effects would, perhaps, be not absolutely beyond the power of such a manager as Mr. Irving. But by the time he began the Second Part—"The Emperor Julian"—Ibsen evidently saw that the theatre of the imagination was the only one in which his immense drama could be played; and in this Part the scene changes, I suppose, twenty or thirty times, the Acts are enormously long, and battles, processions, and earthquakes follow each other with a rapidity which would dazzle even Mr. Augustus Harris in Christmas week.

This is, then, a drama for the closet, and it is Browning and not Shakespeare whom the dramatist has set himself to rival—indeed there is much in the subject and in the hero's character which reminds one of Browning. These closet-dramas are hybrids, as has been often said; even, perhaps, too often, for it is a fair question whether their severest critic would care to lose "Emperor or Galilean," or "The Return of the Druses," or Longfellow's delightful "Golden Legend"—hybrids or no hybrids. And, if the author felt that he could best tell his story in this form, why should he not?

Hybrid or no hybrid, this is a magnificent work; and I own that I feel myself altogether unworthy to criticise it. Even for a

reader whose knowledge of history, of philosophy, and of the drama, made him far more competent to discuss such a play, its mere magnitude and grasp would demand that not merely a few hours and three or four sheets of paper be given to its consideration, but much time and—shall I say a double number of the "Quarterly Review?"

So I will only jot down a few thoughts, a few objections, a few "appreciations," that on a first reading have suggested themselves; well assured that in a very little while you—with many hundreds more of those who read with intelligence—will know the book for yourself, and prize it.

First let me note that this poem (which is the natural word, though the drama be written throughout in prose) certainly extends our knowledge of Ibsen, as neither "Rosmersholm" nor the "Lady from the Sea" extended it. Even in the "Vikings at Helgeland" Ibsen was more or less on his own ground, and if Mr. Buchanan called him a "Zola with a wooden leg" one could only answer that one did not think so. But here, in this "drama of world-history," the author comes out into the fair field of literature. Comparisons instantly suggest themselves with Shakespeare, Browning, Flaubert, Landor, Kingsley if you like, and—Victor Hugo; and, to my thinking, with all of these but the first Ibsen fairly holds his own. His simplicity sets him above Browning, his story is not lost amid a parade of archæology like Flaubert's, while he grasps his period as firmly as Landor—and with a hand how much greater! Finally, he is not hysterical like Kingsley nor melodramatic like Hugo. His actual literary style cannot, of course, be judged in a translation; but it seems to be free from mannerism, simple and yet not bald. Whether it ever rises to real eloquence may be doubted.

Perhaps, after all, one gets the clearest notion of Ibsen, as a historical dramatist, by comparing him with Shakespeare; one sees thus his strength and his limitations most plainly. To begin with, I don't think that I have ever read a historical play which interested me so much as "Emperor and Galilean," except Shakespeare's; and many of Shakespeare's "Histories" are less constantly interesting than this, though their interest, at its height, is far intenser.

Ibsen's one subject—the subject, it might be said, of almost all his plays—happens to be precisely that which Shakespeare hardly ever touches upon: religion, in one form or another—actual controversial theology, or the accepted laws of morality (which our author refuses to accept).

Shakespeare is absolutely dramatic in his treatment of religion; his characters have their creeds, but he declines to criticise them, and indeed says very little about them. Ibsen, though in this story he treats Paganism and Christianity with an extraordinary impartiality—standing "neither for God nor for his enemies"—is yet above all things religious. The soul of man is the one thing that has interest for this extraordinary and searching intellect; indeed, a truer name than "drama" for this story of the great Apostate would have been "The Adventures of a Soul."

Throughout the ten acts of this vast play, only one figure is long in the foreground. Of its sixty personages, not one of any prominence, except the hero, is to be seen in much more than two or three acts. Maximus stands by the side of Julian and advises him through a good many of the later scenes; but except for this each successive Act has an almost entirely new group of minor characters, through which the hero passes. It is a panorama rather than a play.

How unlike all this is to Shakespeare needs not to be said, but perhaps the main differences between the two poets are these:

Shakespeare is interested in (let me say) Mark Antony as a human being, Ibsen is interested in Julian as a study of character; and Shakespeare has always, first of all, a story to tell, while Ibsen only arranges a series of events to develop his theory of the hero's character.

The result is, naturally enough, that Shakespeare's characters have a completeness and a strength lacking in Ibsen's. The story—which Shakespeare never invented—brings its personages face to face with all manner of facts, taken so to speak haphazard, and we see how they deal with them, what manner of men they are, "all round." But Ibsen only develops their characters as they interest him; and the result is an exaggeration of introspection which makes almost all his people—from the vigorous Julian to the vigorous Rebecca West—seem unpractical, and, from the first, hardly sane. So when the Apostate suddenly goes to Gaul and becomes a brilliant General, winning victory after victory where practised commanders have failed, one is inclined simply not to believe it: the Julian whom one has been learning to know might have done these things, but the odds are so much against it that one asks for fuller proof. If Ibsen had taken as his protagonist Mr. Gladstone he would have made a most fascinating study of the great orator—but nobody would have believed that that man was three times Prime Minister.

This Gallic act, however, stands so completely apart from the rest of the play that I am inclined to suspect that this was the portion of the work written in 1864, nine years before the complete drama was published. Only in this Act is to be found that "female interest" which the modern dramatist looks upon as so essential; and at the end of this Act occurs the one great stage-scene of the play—obviously founded upon Mark Antony's great scene in "Julius Cæsar," by the way.

You must not think, however, that there are no "stage-effects"—or no staginess—in "Emperor and Galilean." Many of the scenes would be most effective in the actual theatre, and the treatment of character is sometimes even too theatrical. Perhaps the finest scenes of the whole play are those which show how tyranny awakes the spirit of martyrdom: and while, the destruction of the Temple of Apollo by the earthquake is grandiose after the manner of Victor Hugo—at his strongest, I admit—the alternate strophes of Pagans and Christians, in the scene before, are a close reproduction of the "effect" in "Lucrezia Borgia" at which the simpler Dumas smiled, and which seems in truth better fitted for opera than for pure tragedy.

Perhaps more important, though, is a certain exaggeration of character which also reminds one of Hugo and of the theatre: Julian's constant intention to "write a treatise" is mere stage-comedy, and helps to emphasize the weakness which makes his character inconceivable. But this, I admit, is the impression which nearly all the people in Ibsen make upon me. His character-studies interest me enormously: they fascinate me so much that, like a child with a doll, I can't help pulling them to pieces: but *en somme*, I begin and end with saying, like Mrs. Gamp, that "I don't believe there ain't no such persons."

I am, my dear Mrs. Prig, your sceptical

MUS IN URBE.

P.S.—Mr. Archer's translation demands a word, had one but the Norwegian wherewith to test it. It seems, however, well-wrought and scholarly, if a little cold. Comparing it with the German version by Herr Brausewetter, one cannot but see how much more difficult is the task of rendering Norwegian into English. "*Wollen* heisst *wollen müssen*" is no doubt clearer than the hardly satisfactory "*To will is to have to will.*"

NOTES AND NEWS.

We cannot but think that the manager of the Grand Theatre, Islington, has misjudged his patrons' appetite for Shakespeare's masterpieces. "Hamlet," with an actor of any renown in the part, is always "good for" at least a fair house—if we may use the commercial terms which would certainly have been employed by the practical bard. Why, then, when he had Mr. Hermann Vezin for his Hamlet, did our manager arbitrarily assume that two hours and three-quarters of tragedy would be as much as his audience could stand? Three hours and a half is about as short a time as "Hamlet," with all the customary cuts, can be played in; and the curtain has risen at 7.35 in Islington this week—though, with a mistaken wariness, the public prints were made to announce that the play would not begin till 8.15. Therefore the most punctual lost forty minutes of Shakespeare; and the first act of "Hamlet" is not a thing to be willingly missed.

However, for ourselves Mr. Vezin's Hamlet is an old friend, and always welcome—wherever he begins. Comparing this actor with his juniors the other night, the points which struck one most were his variety of tone, his vigour, and, above all, his quickness; and this last quality was invaluable in the long tragedy, whose varying scenes went on—one might almost say brightly, at all events with an interest which never flagged while Mr. Vezin was on the stage. This was not in consequence of Mr. Vezin's habit of rattling through some of the longer speeches so fast that they were hardly to be understood, and were consequently the only things in his part that dragged: but because he never dwelt upon points, he never broke up the dialogue with "Macready pauses"—merits which "stuck fiery off" against, for example, the deliberation of the First Gravedigger: who, though thoroughly intelligent, was the least humorous Gravedigger we were ever doomed to see. Another actor who, though full of intelligence, might learn much from Mr. Vezin, was Mr. G. R. Foss, who delivered the King's great speech—"Oh, my offence is rank"—almost in a monotone.

On the whole, Mr. Vezin was fairly supported; no part was really badly played, and the stage-management, if it lacked originality, was careful. Miss Helen Ferrers, as the Queen, was perhaps the strongest of the company—after the Prince of Denmark himself—and spoke her lines with a fulness of emphasis too often lacking in the rest. (By the way, Miss Ferrers was guilty of a strange reading of the familiar line "Mad as the sea and wind when both contend"; but, as a whole, the text was carefully spoken). Mr. Carter's Polonius and the Ghost of Mr. J. B. Gordon were really useful and sensible performances; and one of the most intelligently played of the minor parts was Mr. H. Doughty's Osric.

Manet the Ophelia. One has heard so much of Miss Laura Johnson that, though she made her "first appearance on any stage" but a year ago, it is difficult not to judge her as a finished actress. This, however, she could not be, and is not; and it is, after all, hardly possible to criticise an artist to any avail until he or she has full command over his or her powers. Ophelia is a part which gives the actress little chance until the famous "mad scenes" of the Fourth Act are reached; and in those scenes it is nowadays not easy to be very original. But it can at least be said that Miss Johnson spoke her lines with the fullest intelligence—there was certainly no fault to be found with her "readings," except a slight American accent, easily to be corrected. All that seems lacking at present is initiative, a distinctive personality; and this, we are inclined to fancy, will appear more in stronger parts than Ophelia. Young as she is, we should say—from her recitals at the Princes' Hall and elsewhere—that Miss Johnson is more likely to make a name as Lady Macbeth or Emilia than as Juliet, or even Portia.

On Thursday evening, too late for notice this week, the new farce at the Comedy—happily christened "Jane."

A singularly strong cast is announced for "Much Ado About Nothing," most delightful of Shakespearean revivals at the Lyceum. Mr. Mackintosh's Dogberry and Mr. Wenman's Leonato should be specially interesting bits of acting.

Mr. Hinshelwood, the "Australian poet," whose works we noticed a week

or two ago, writes to ask us to state that he was not born in Australia, and indeed only passed three or four years in "the land of gum-trees and dust."

Rumours of Ibsen performances are in the air. Dr. Aveling and "The Lady from the Sea" are for the moment resting; but a "Rosmersholm"—if not two—and the revival of an earlier play impend. Moreover, Mr. Archer promises us the translation of a new and hitherto unpublished work.

"A Doll's House" has just been acted with great success in Edinburgh. Some of the daring players were amateurs; but two "professionals"—Miss Marie Fraser and Mr. Forbes Drummond—seem to have made a strong impression as Nora and Helmer.

A play by Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, "Woodbarrow Farm," was very happily *matinée'd* two days before the original *matinée* of "Captain Swift," and has since been on the shelf in England. Its successful performance in America has, however, led to its acceptance by Mr. Thomas Thorne, and with it the first season of the reconstructed Vaudeville will begin.

Special interest attached to the Dramatic and Musical Recital given by Messrs. Frank and Algernon Lindo at Steinway Hall on Tuesday afternoon, Dec. 9, owing to the production of a new operetta called "New Year's Eve," the libretto and music respectively being by those gentlemen. Taking just half an hour in performance the little sketch, produced a very pleasant impression upon the audience, the music being bright and unpretending, while the words are smartly written and amusing. It was well played by Mr. Frederick Bovill and Miss Annie Schuberth, but would have been improved by more rehearsal, as the "voice of the prompter was heard in the land" more frequently than was agreeable. The remainder of the programme was made up of recitations by Mr. Frank and pianoforte solos by Mr. Algernon Lindo. Amongst the recitations the "Virginia" of Macaulay and the scene between Lady Anne and Gloster from "Richard III." should be praised as examples of sound and manly elocution. Mr. Lindo has, to judge by appearances, carefully studied the method of Mr. Irving, and in the Shakespeare excerpt reproduced his very tones in a fashion positively startling. The excellent pianoforte playing of Mr. Algernon Lindo was a valuable factor in the success of the entertainment. He found great favour with his hearers, and was recalled after each of his appearances.

A strong company and unusually magnificent scenery are promised for the new Crystal Palace pantomime, whose subject is the never-dying Dick Whittington. Mr. Horace Lennard is once more responsible for the book; and it needs not to be said that the whole pantomime has been "invented and produced" by Mr. Oscar Barrett.

THE DRAMATISTS.

LX.—VICTOR HUGO.

With Victor Hugo the drama passes into the realm of pure extravagance. This was the dictum of the classicists; nor need the most ardent admirers of Hugo now dispute its truth, though the reproach came ill from the defenders of Corneille and Racine.

Such men, such morals, such manners, as those to be found in "Hernani," "Le Roi s'Amuse," "Ruy Blas," certainly never existed elsewhere since the world began to be. Even the magnificent giants of Calderon have no kinship with the fabulous beings who are the heroes and villains of Hugo. In "Marion Delorme," as in "Marie Tudor," the whole story is a dream, we see men as trees walking: immense, stately, impossible, often grotesque.

All that the bitterest opponent of Hugo can claim we yield, two things alone excepted—first, that his verse was bad, and second, that his absurdities were greater than those of Racine. Even we will grant that the reformer of French verse went now and then too far in breaking up the metre of those stiff alexandrines to which he gave movement, colour, life. Such a line as—

J'entends du bruit. On vient par l'escalier
Dérobé—

is, perhaps, contrary to the genius of French verse.

There is nothing, then, that we will not yield—in reason; nor do we think that there is anything reasonable to be said in defence of the grotesque enormities of Hugo's later years, when he had seemingly lost all sense of humour, and had conceived an admiration so boundless for one great poet—himself—that all his later works were but, in one way or another, canticles in glorification of that one object.

But his plays were all written before he was forty, and were most of them written for actual performance: which is a great check upon the extravagance even of the wildest imagination. Real men and women had to speak those lines, to do the deeds which the poet set down for them; and we find, accordingly, in the best of Hugo's plays, "Hernani," "Marion Delorme," "Ruy Blas," "Le Roi s'Amuse"—the finest of his qualities, with the least admixture of his vices.

And what wonderful and delightful plays these are. They will not bear examination as real life, as the plays of Shakespeare bear it; but they challenge no comparison with these, and have their assured place apart in the delightful realms of sheer fantasy. To read them, or to see them, is like listening to the brilliant improvisations of an Eastern storyteller; and two of the finest—Marion Delorme and Hernani—are almost literally improvisations. They were written, one after the other, "straight off," in half-a-dozen weeks. "Marion Delorme" was to have been, "Hernani" actually was, the young poet's first challenge—on the boards of a theatre—to those classicists who were burning to avenge the defeat the young Dumas had inflicted upon them.

We will not tell again the story of that wonderful "first night," when Théophile Gautier, with his crimson waistcoat and his hair falling to his waist, led the five hundred romanticists in the pit to victory. The fight lasted long after that evening; and it was said that during the run of "Hernani" every line in it had been either applauded or hissed—and probably both.

In the end, as we know, romance won the day; and, though Rachel galvanised to a semblance of life the dry bones of Racine, it may now be fairly said that the classic tragedy of France is dead and buried. What shall take its place in the long run it is hard to say; for one can scarcely predict immortality for that wonderful outburst of youth, the lyric melodrama of "Hernani" and of "Marion Delorme."

These works are in truth hardly to be criticised: they are to be enjoyed and—we will not say forgotten, but hardly thought on till it is time to enjoy them again. They are "all made up of ecstasy: of stars, love, fire, immensities, mysteries, and lions of the desert. They are Byron turned into an opera—and, indeed, they have had their longest life upon the lyric stage, set to the music of Verdi, Mercadante, and Donizetti.

Of their author, too, born almost with the century whose first eighty years he filled with his fame, it would be absurd to write half-a-dozen lines of biography; and for his verse, an example is worth a page of criticism. Take a dozen lines from the last scene of "Le Roi s'Amuse"—the Jester's lament over his murdered child:—

Si belle et morte! oh, non!—Donnez-moi quelque chose
Pour essayer son front.—Sa lèvre est encor rose.
Oh! si vous l'aviez vue, oh! je la vois encor
Quand elle avait deux ans avec ses cheveux d'or!
Lorsqu'elle était enfant, je la tenais ainsi.
Elle dormait sur moi, tout comme la voici!
Quand elle réveillait, si vous saviez quel ange!
Je ne lui semblais pas quelque chose d'étrange,
Elle me souriait avec ses yeux divins,
Et moi je lui baisais ses deux petites mains!

FOREIGN NOTES.

The performance of "Carmen" at the Grand Opéra in aid of the Bizet Memorial Fund was a splendid success, both from an artistic and financial point of view. The "Carmen" was the original "Carmen" of 1875, Madame Galli-Marié; Madame Melba was Michaela, M. Jean de Reszké Don José, and M. Lassalle Escamillo. Madame Galli-Marié was dramatically as fine as ever, but vocally she is said to have been hampered by a severe cold. The other members of the party all won the most enthusiastic approval. The receipts of the evening amounted to 45,000 francs (£1,800), which, says "Le Ménestrel," added to the amount of the subscriptions, will suffice to raise a monument all gold.

At the Opéra-Comique preparations are made to produce "Enguerrande," an opera the book of which is MM. Emile Bergerat and Victor Wilder, the music by M. Chapuis. The title-part of this work being written for mezzo-soprano, the managers are endeavouring to secure the services of Madame Richard.

The Paris version of "Tannhäuser" was produced at the Opera House of Berlin on the 5th inst. with great success, even the usual severe critics of the management admitting that on this occasion a serious and honourable attempt has been made to present the work in an artistic manner. The chief parts were allotted as follows: Elisabeth, Frl. Leisinger; Venus, Frau Sucher; Tannhäuser, Herr Sylva; Wolfram, Herr Betz; of whom the representatives of Venus and Wolfram are considered superior to the other two. But the great merit of the production is in the *mise-en-scène*.

Franz Erkel, the most famous and popular living composer of Hungary, celebrated his 80th birthday at Pest on Nov. 7 by appearing at a public concert and playing the solo part in Mozart's Piano Concerto in D minor. Naturally his performance was received with the most enthusiastic applause. Erkel, besides being the author of many very popular songs and part-songs has composed several operas, two of which, "Bank Ban" and "King Stephan" are the most popular pieces of the Hungarian operatic repertoire.

Dr. H. Pudor, writing from Italy, gives some curious particulars of his operatic experiences there:—"In Genoa I wandered into the Politeama Theatre when "Gioconda" was being given. As I entered, the reek of tobacco came in my face. Men wore their hats on their heads. There was no prompter's box, and the prompter sat in his place without any attempt at concealment, with his score leaning against the footlights. The curtain was adorned, not with paintings, but with advertisements fastened on it. Even amongst the orchestral players some had cigars lying on their desks." After a very unflattering description of the opera, the late director of the Dresden Conservatoire concludes by asking "Are we indeed in the country in which Raffaele created the Madonna di San Sisto?"

Herr Rubinstein seems to be altogether out of temper with his countrymen. He has resigned his post as Director of the Conservatorium at St. Petersburg, and is believed to be on the point of quitting Russia altogether. In a letter addressed to the musical writer, Herr Baskin, he complains of the indifference of the public; Russian society dawdles on in complete apathy, and the direction of the Imperial Theatre places itself in distinct hostility to the Conservatorium. "This hostility to my creations," says he, "is to me entirely inexplicable. It really looks as though I had committed some crime. In all probability I shall retire from the directorship; for, of course, any one can do simply the signing of papers." The composer has further said, "We have no music. We have only intrigues and blarney—of serious things we know nothing. Abroad there are different camps—literary opponents, one may say—but with us everything proceeds from personal enmity." French papers profess to know that if Rubinstein leaves Russia he means to settle in Paris.

Berlioz' "Faust" was repeated at Berlin on the 9th, and it is hoped that the work will henceforth obtain the popularity it deserves. Prof. Klindworth caused considerable changes to be made in the translation, with a view to using the actual words of Goethe wherever possible.

Chamber-music is remarkably well represented in Vienna. For some time past there have been four excellent and well-known Quartet parties, those under the names of Hellmesberger, Rosé, Winkler, and Kretschmann. To these a fifth has just been added, consisting of HH. Wehle, Hofmann, Fitzner, and Kraholetz.

Sig. Mascagni is still the man of the day in Italy. He has been commissioned to write a cantata for the opening of the Exhibition at Palermo in 1892. He is now busily engaged in writing his opera founded on the tale of "Les Rantzau" by Erckmann-Chatrian, which is to be produced next autumn. Those who profess to know say that the overture is a very fine piece of music. Another opera of Mascagni's, "Guglielmo Ratcliff" (a work written before the "Cavalleria Rusticana"), is also to be performed next year. This is described as of a weird and very original character.

The "Événement" announces that the Theatre Lyrique, the unfortunate theatre which M. Verdhurt has just had to close for want of support, is to be reopened shortly under the direction of a distinguished musical publisher; and with the "Samson et Dalila" of M. Saint-Saëns as the opening piece—the very work with which M. Verdhurt began his short season.

GLUCK'S "ORFEO."

The revival of this beautiful opera in England is the greatest musical event of the present year. For many years past Gluck's operas have never gone beyond the "prospecting" stage, being, in the words of Chorley, "regularly promised by every theatrical manager who would, like Mrs. Jarley, be calm and classical, but somehow coming scantily to performance." Said Oxenford, on hearing that a certain young actor was considered of great promise—he may promise as much as he likes, so long as he never performs. This represents, I think, very fairly the attitude of the British public as regards the production of the works of Gluck and other classical composers. On the authority of Berlioz this opera was first produced at Vienna in 1764, with Calzabigi as librettist, Maria Quaglio as stage manager, and Gasparo Angiolini as ballet master, while the three principals were the sopranist, Guadagni as Orpheus, Marianna Bianchi as Eurydice, and Lucia Clavaran as Eros. It enjoyed an immediate success, of which the music might be said to be both a revelation and a revolution—from the rococo style till then in vogue, Guadagni being remarkably good as the hero. I have spoken of this singer in my article on the "Musical Soprani" last year, but as I fear sorely my writings are very ephemeral, "living in Settle's numbers one day more," I fear I shall therefore have to repeat myself and trespass on the good nature of my readers. Guadagni, after Vienna, introduced this opera in Parma, and later in 1769 in London at the King's Theatre. He had sung there a few years before as the principal "serious" singer in an Italian "burletta" troupe, but was then considered a wild and careless singer. Nevertheless Handel thought sufficiently well of him, and entrusted him with Mrs. Cibber's parts, i.e., the contralto parts in the "Messiah" and "Samson." According to Burney,* to whose history I am indebted for all the details concerning Guadagni's career, Garriek gave him instruction in acting, and engaged him to play in English in the "Fairies," an operatic version of the "Midsummer Night's Dream," but his name does not appear in "Geneste." On his return Burney stated that, as an actor, Guadagni had no equal on any stage. His singing, too, became remarkable for delicacy and refinement, thanks to the way he had profited from the instruction given him by the old sopranist Gizziello, although his voice was thin and feeble, having become a soprano with an extension of compass from six or seven notes to fourteen or fifteen. In addition, he was remarkably handsome, while his attitude and gestures were so full of grace and propriety that they would have been excellent studies for a statuary. Unfortunately he did not remain long in this country partly owing to differences with the management; more probably on account of having become very unpopular with his audiences owing to his determined spirit of supporting the dignity and propriety of his dramatic character. Thus he would refuse to bow acknowledgment when applauded, or to destroy the theatrical illusion by his acceptance of an encore at the termination of a scene to the great resentment of the audience, that at length he never appeared without being hissed.† The last trace of performance I can find of Orfeo in Burney's pages is in 1785, on its revival for the sopranist Tenducci.

In the meantime this opera appeared in Gallic dress as "Orphée et Eurydice" at the Académie de Musique, Paris, in 1774, soon after the production of "Iphigénie en Aulide" with Legros, a counter tenor for whom Gluck had to transpose the music of Orpheus, Sophie Arnould, and Rosalie Levasseur in the three characters. Several additions were made to the score, inclusive of the opening solo and chorus in the scene of the Elysian fields, the first song of Love, and the bravura finale to the 1st act (really written by Bertoni), and the substitution of a chorus from Gluck's "Echo et Narcisse" for the original finale, besides additional ballet music. A characteristic story is told by Berlioz in his "A travers chants" of Gluck at a rehearsal of this opera. Legros would shout out the phrase of Orpheus on his entry into Tartarus, "Be touched by my tears," until the composer was exasperated, and requested the singer to moderate his clamour, as he would be

* "History of Music."

† Ibid.

very unlikely to scream in such fashion in the nether regions*. According to Lajarte this opera was performed forty-five consecutive times, and remained at intervals in the repertory down to 1849, having in all been played 297 times. Adolphe Nourrit played the part in 1839, and rejected Berton's air in favour of an impassioned air from the above-mentioned "Echo et Narcisse."

"Orfeo" was next revived in Paris at the Théâtre Lyrique by Carvalho on Nov. 19, 1859, with Mme. Viardot-Garcia, Marie Sax (the subsequent creator of Sélka in "L'Africaine") as Eurydice, minus her first air, given to Mlle. Moreau as a Happy Spirit, and Mlle. Marie Marimon as a graceful Cupid, although she did lengthen out her phrases unduly, on the authority of Berlioz. Thanks to the genius of Mme. Viardot, and with the adventitious aid of beautiful scenery and appropriate costumes, the opera enjoyed a new lease of life for 115 nights, although one irreverent wag designated "Orpheus with his Lute" as "Pauline and her eternal boot-jack." I cannot here forbear quotations from Berlioz in his *critique* from the "Débats," and from the "Thirty Years' Musical Reminiscences of Chorley," concerning the wonderful performance of Mme. Viardot; and I should imagine Miss Giulia Ravogli must have founded her grand impersonation on that of the older singer, as the greater part of the criticisms might be written *mutatis mutandis* of the gifted Italian lady. Chorley has written of Mme. Viardot that "her want of regularity of feature and of prettiness helped instead of impairing the sadness and solemnity of the mourner's countenance. The supple and statuesque grace of the figure gave interest and meaning to every step and every attitude."

... Further, the peculiar quality of Madame Viardot's voice, its unevenness, its occasional harshness and feebleness, consistent with tones of the gentlest sweetness, was turned by her to account with rare felicity, as giving the variety of light and shade to every word of soliloquy, to every appeal of dialogue. A more perfect honeyed voice might have recalled the woman too often to fit with the idea of the youth. Her manner of singing Berton's bravura air with the cadenza composed by herself and utilised by Miss Ravogli must have been masterly. But, according to Berlioz, the culminating effect was her delivery of "Che farò," singing it in three different ways—first very slowly, as though oppressed with a self-contained grief; afterwards with a trembling voice, as though choked by a flood of tears; and finally, after the second adagio, she took the theme at a more rapid movement on leaving the body of Eurydice, where she had been kneeling, and rushing out mad with despair to the opposite side of the stage, with all the cries and weeping of a desperate grief. "Some of her admirers . . . forgot themselves and cried out 'bis' . . . and with difficulty could be silenced. Some people would cry 'bis' for the scene of Priam in the tent of Achilles or for 'To be or not to be.'† Not that in the midst of this prodigious success. . . . No vulgar manifestation was brought to light. Not a single bouquet was thrown. Mme. Viardot does not buy her ovations."‡

Probably on account of its Parisian success Mr. Gye revived the opera at Covent Garden, June 27th, 1860, with Mesdames Rosa Caillag (Orpheus), Penco (Eurydice), Nantier Didiée (Love), and Miolan-Carvalho as the Happy Spirit; but the opera was coldly received, for though the others were good; Mme. Caillag was but a moderate exponent of the principal part. The performances of the opera at Cambridge and Covent Garden are of too recent occurrence to need further mention here. The opera is still a stock favourite in Germany and Austria, as well as other operas of Gluck, notably "Iphigenia in Tauris" and "Armida." Were the two last operas again revived in England they should be successful owing to their possessing more action and incident than the opera now under consideration. Albani as Iphigenia, Maurel as Orestes, Giulia Ravogli as Armida, and Jean de Reszké as Rinaldo should go far to justify the dictum of M. Jules Janin, *à propos* of the successive revival of classical operas at the Lyrique—"We do not revive the masterpieces, the masterpieces revive us."

Gluck did not only possess a free and bold intellect, a lively disposition, and an acute understanding of the dramatically effective, and of the characteristic, but he also possessed—what is at best given only to a few—a deep feeling for the grand.—Otto Jahn.

* A similar story is told by Baron von Weber in his "Life of his Father," how Weber, when in England, was rehearsing a prayer which the chorus *more suo* was shouting at the top of its voice, to which the composer demurred, on the ground that the chorus would not shout this in the presence of the Almighty.

† A travers chants.

‡ "Journal des Débats."

CONCERTS.

A large audience assembled in St. James's Hall last Friday when the students of the Royal Academy of Music gave a concert, conducted by the Principal, Dr. Mackenzie. Two instrumental compositions, the works of students, were introduced; an Overture "The Fire Worshipers" by Granville Bantock, and an Intermezzo from a Symphony in G by Reginald Steggall. Both are works of sufficient promise and interest to warrant us in expecting much of their respective composers. Miss Greta Williams's singing of Handel's "Lord to Thee, each night and day," was earnest and thoughtful. Miss Chéron displayed a good voice in "Nobil Signor," but a little more piquancy in the rendering would have been desirable. Miss Kate Cove's otherwise satisfactory delivery of "Hear ye, Israel," was marred by nervousness, which prevented it being sufficiently commanding. Miss Llewella Davies played Mendelssohn's G minor concerto in refined and musicianly style, and the Rondo from Brahms' D minor concerto was intelligently interpreted by Miss Mabel Lyons. The youthful Master Stanislaus Szczepanowski deserves praise for his conscientious performance of the Allegro from Mozart's concerto in C minor. Mr. Bertie P. Parker played Max Bruch's "Kol Nidrai" expressively. The Allegro from Rheinberger's concerto in F for organ, strings, and three horns was also given, with Mr. Reginald Steggall at the organ, and the concert ended with Sullivan's overture to Act IV. of the "Tempest."

Cherubini's noble "Medea" overture—magnificently played—was the first work in Sir Charles Hallé's last concert, and was followed by Mozart's delightful Romance in C, from "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik," of which an encore was demanded and granted. Beethoven's violin concerto was played by Madame Neruda in her best style—than which nothing higher need be said; and the second part of the concert consisted of Berlioz' marvellous "Symphonie Fantastique." The extraordinary work—which was included, by the way, in the programme of the first concert given last year by Sir Charles—was, on the whole, admirably rendered. The only movement which received a little less than its due was the second, which was scarcely fanciful enough; but the other sections were very adequately dealt with. This may appear cold praise for so splendid a reading—but it implies a great deal. The audience was much larger than on any previous occasion, and showed an enthusiasm which proved how unconscious they were of the impending decease of the concerts. Alas!

The last of the Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts before Christmas, on the 13th, was distinguished by the production of a new symphony by an English composer, Mr. Edw. German, not long ago a pupil of the Royal Academy, and already favourably known at the Palace by his Overture to "Richard III.," which was played there last February. In the first movement of his symphony the composer seems haunted by reminiscences of his former work, the two chief subjects being in the same keys, and having much the same character as well as some peculiarities of rhythm, such as half-bars, in common. It may be said of the work in general that so far from being in any way inspired by the spirit of Wagner or Brahms its thematic material has more of the character of an earlier school, and in the minuet particularly shows more of French than German influence. The Andante and Minuet which follow one another without any break are very pleasing movements, but nowhere throughout the work do we find intimation of any great power. The Finale is very bright and spirited, but appears to us a little too much inspired by a certain work of the excellent Principal of the Royal Academy. Mr. German's first symphony may not satisfy exacting demands, but it is well written and interesting: the audience received it warmly, and recalled the author, who conducted his own work, to the platform. It was unlucky for the composer that it should have come so soon after a magnificent rendering of Beethoven's Concerto in E flat, which never more nobly vindicated its right to the proud title of "Emperor." Miss Fanny Davies has never played it more finely, and if she had but a little more power in rapid passages requiring two fingers in each hand her performance might challenge comparison with that of any other pianist of the day. The overtures to "Rosamunde" and "Tell" began and ended the concert, which, in the absence of Mr. Manns, was ably conducted by Mr. C. Jung, ordinarily the leader of the orchestra. We should mention that

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Miss Davies also played a Romance by Schumann and two not very striking pieces from Rubinstein's last work, "Akrostichon." Miss Fillunger sang very effectively Beethoven's *scena*, "Ah! perfido," and one of the numbers of that fine set of Brahms' songs which is entitled "Die schöne Magelone."

Mr. Richard Gompertz, with the assistance of Messrs. Haydn Inwards, Emil Kreuz, and Charles Ould, gave a concert of chamber music at Princes' Hall on Thursday, the 11th inst., putting forward a scheme of considerable interest. The principal items were Beethoven's Quartet in E flat, Op. 127, and Stanford's Pianoforte Quintet in D minor, Op. 25. The so-called "posthumous quartets" of the Bonn Master make so great a demand upon the intellectual endowments of both those who would play them and those who would hear them aright that it is perhaps not altogether surprising they figure but seldom in concert programmes—those of the Popular Concerts not excepted. Nevertheless, we cannot but regret the neglect. Works so original, so noble in design, so profound in feeling, and so truly the outcome of the composer's mental and psychical state are worthy of the closest study, and in no way can this knowledge be better obtained than through the medium of the concert-room. Mr. Gompertz and his companions did so well that it was possible to imagine that each had, like the famous players of 1825, pledged "his honour to do his best and vie with his comrades in zeal." The Cambridge Professor's quintet, which has already been heard at Mr. Dannreuther's and the Popular Concerts is a bright and vigorous work, and so far may be regarded as an effective composition. It shows, however, less individuality than he has accustomed us to, and it is not likely therefore to take rank as one of his most notable efforts. The performance, with Dr. Stanford himself at the pianoforte, was all that could reasonably be wished. The programme further included the very beautiful Allegro Assai in C minor from an unfinished quartet by Schubert, and the Romance from Joachim's Hungarian Concerto, the latter being given by Mr. Gompertz in very excellent style. Mr. William Shakespeare sang songs by Mozart and Dvůrák, and afforded that satisfaction which is the result of highly finished art.

It is gratifying to find that devotion to the "pipe of peace," the popular "wind instrument" recently introduced at the meetings of the Chamber Music Society of that name, is not likely to distract attention from the more serious aim of the association, to wit, performance of "pieces for pipes." On the contrary, the smoking concert which took place on Friday, the 12th inst., was full of musical interest. First mention is due to a "Quintet in F, Op. 9," for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon, by Sobek, a German clarinetist of repute, but whose compositions, so far as we are aware, are unknown in this country. The present work denotes the composer a practised writer whose predilections are distinctly modern. If it may be accepted as a fair specimen of his style, we gather that Sobek is likely to be noted more for the clearness, conciseness, and effectiveness of his writing than for higher qualities. The saxophone is so seldom heard here, and its exhibition by Mr. Mills proved so entertaining, that he may readily be forgiven the playing of music (!) so commonplace as the Pastorals by Singelée. The tones of the "contralto" instrument used were delightfully soft and round, sharing to a great extent the attributes of those of the clarinet and horn. Their possession, too, of a peculiar, distant character, renders them, we should suppose, invaluable to the composer in search of new and romantic effects. *En passant* we may remind our readers that Mr. F. H. Cowen has introduced a saxophone into the score of "Thorgrim." Other items of this pleasant concert were Weber's Duo Concertante in C minor, for clarinet and pianoforte; Brahms' Trio in F, for violin, horn, and pianoforte; and a Trio in C minor, for flute, violin, and harpsichord, by Bach, works which in every instance are fully representative of their respective composers, and need no comment. The performances throughout maintained a high level of excellence, and all credit is due to Messrs. A. P. Vivian, Lebon, E. Mills, Busby, James, Jackson, and A. Gibson, the executants. The proceedings ended as they had begun—in smoke. *Absit omen.*

Mr. Boscovitz's "Hour with the Spinnet, Harpsichord, and Modern Grand" at the Steinway Hall on the afternoon of the 12th inst. proved most entertaining and instructive. He is an admirable performer on the old instruments which of late have been so frequently heard, and obtained from them a variety of effects which suggested that our great-

grandfathers and mothers were not so badly off for household music after all in spite of Messrs. Steinway's non-existence. Two of the early pieces, "Selling's Round" and "The King's Hunting Jig," in fact distinctly lost by transference to the modern "grand," on which, to contrast the "ancient and modern" instruments, these pieces were subsequently played, the peculiar reedy and characteristic effect produced by the playing of rapid chord passages on the harpsichord being utterly lost on the pianoforte of to-day. On the other hand, pieces of more expressive kind, such as a stately court dance called "The Canaries," by Lulli, gained enormously when reproduced on the "Steinway." Mr. Boscovitz commenced his remarks by a brief reference to the history of stringed instruments and the gradual development of the pianoforte, and interspersed his subsequent performances of representative works of Continental and English composers, from William Byrd to Handel, with biographical and musically historical comments. Mr. Boscovitz played all the examples from memory, which in some of the earlier music was to be regretted, as his fingers now and again strayed into chords which, had they been heard by the original composers, would have caused them considerable astonishment.

Haydn's Quartet in F major, Op. 77, No. 2, headed the programme of last Saturday's Popular Concerts. This is one of the many works in which Haydn's genius shows itself strangely akin to Beethoven's. The Rondo especially, foreshadows the later master, in the character of the subject itself, in the artless manner of its reappearances, and in the pauses that announce the coda. The performance, led by Madame Neruda, was very sympathetic. Madame Haas was heard in Chopin's Fantasia in F minor, her reading of which revealed care and intelligence, and—to greater advantage—in Mendelssohn's C minor Trio. Brahms' Liebeslieder Walzer (first set), sung by Mrs. Henschel, Miss Lena Little, Messrs. Shakespeare and Henschel, and accompanied by Madame Haas and Mr. Frantzen, were an enjoyable feature of the concert.

Mozart's Quartet in B flat, No. 3, with which Monday's "Pop" was opened, began a little tamely; but long before the end of the first movement audience and artists were alike interested, and the latter movements were delightfully played by Madame Neruda and her associates. The pianist was Madame Haas, who played Beethoven's Variations on an Original Theme in F, with which she obviously finds herself in complete sympathy. She played them with much fluency and unaffected expression. The theme might perhaps have been given more slowly with advantage, but, on the whole, the double recall given to her was well deserved. Grieg's Sonata in F for violin and pianoforte was played by Madame Neruda and Madame Haas, who gave the delightful work with full appreciation, and the programme was completed by Brahms' Gipsy Songs, in the interpretation of which Mrs. Henschel, Miss Lena Little, Mr. Shakespeare, and Mr. Henschel were associated. Fortunately we are all familiar with the admirable way in which these beautiful songs are interpreted by the four artists named, who on this occasion excelled themselves. The accompaniments were played by Madame Haas and Mr. Frantzen.

Tuesday last saw the close of the Musical Guild's fourth series of concerts. More than half the evening was occupied with the "heavenly length" of Schubert's Ottet for wind and stringed instruments, which was given as nearly as possible in its entirety. We need not insist upon the formidable nature of the task the young players thus set themselves. As *ensemble* is the strong point of this society, no surprise need be felt at the fact that in these rather than in solo passages the chief merits of the performance lay. Nor, because there was cause for drawing a distinction, are we debarred from declaring the rendering as a whole excellent in intention, and one comprehending a fair measure of accomplishment. Miss Annie Fry and Miss Zoë Pyne joined forces in Mozart's Sonata for pianoforte and violin in A major with success, albeit the honours of the effort can scarcely be said to have been equally divided. Considerable determination and spirit were evinced by Miss Mary Macdonald, who played the first of Schumann's "Caprices après Paganini;" and the programme was completed by Mr. Peter Musson's singing of songs by Handel and Brahms. It should be mentioned that Mr. Frederic Sewell was, as usual, an efficient accompanist, and that a fifth series of concerts is announced to take place in May and June next.

The Bach Choir opened its season on Tuesday evening with a performance of Brahms' "Requiem" and Dr. Parry's "St. Cecilia's Day"—works which in earnestness of intention, at least, are not unworthy companions. Happily there is no need to describe the admirable qualities of either work, that of Brahms being widely accepted as the noblest choral composition of the generation; while Dr. Parry's Ode is recognised as a work well worthy of its composer. We need, therefore, only say that the choral and orchestral parts of each were excellently rendered, under the direction of Prof. Villiers Stanford and Dr. Parry respectively; that Miss Liza Lehmann and Mr. Henschel were the soloists, of whom each, after her and his kind, sang with admirable intention and effect, which is to imply a good many things; as, for instance, that an earnest was given of a capital season.

That excellent and popular artist Madame Sinico, gave her annual concert on Friday afternoon of last week at the residence of Mrs. Lancaster Wallis, 57, Lancaster Gate, when the presence of a large and "smart" audience (a murrain take the word) testified to the appreciation in which Madame Sinico is held. Ambroise Thomas's song, "Connais tu le pays" was the concert-giver's only solo, but in this she displayed all the qualities of technique and artistic intelligence which are such familiar features of her performances. In the duet from "Mefistofele" she joined her daughter, Miss Amelia Sinico, who has happily inherited a large share of her mother's abilities, and made a great effect in Wallace's "Scenes that are brightest." A number of distinguished artists came to Madame Sinico's help on this occasion, chief among whom was of course Madame Albani, who sang the "Jewel Song" from "Faust" and Braga's "Serenata," it is needless to say, with immense success. Miss Leila Dufour, Miss Henrietta Cowen, Madame Zoe Caryl, Mr. Franklin Clive, and Mr. Tivadar Nachez were amongst the other "assistants."

Miss Otta Brony, a young Danish lady who, under the name of Miss Brønnum, has already made her mark in London concert-rooms, and whose performance of the part of "Love" in "Orfeo" was a pleasant feature of Mr. Lago's recent season, gave a concert on Tuesday evening at 108, Harley-street. Her clear and flexible voice and highly cultivated style were once more made very obvious; and her versatility is sufficiently shown by the fact that she was equally successful in such different pieces as an air from Godard's "Jocelyn," Rossini's "Una voce," Hollman's "Chanson d'amour," "Kathleen Mavourneen," and songs by Meyer Helmund and Hartman. Miss Brony is, in a word, an artist. The other vocalist was Madame Belle Cole, whose beautiful voice was as effective as ever; violoncello solos were given admirably by Mr. Hollman and the pianist; Mdlle. Louise Douste de Fortis played various solos with great charm and ability.

An interesting concert was given on the 5th inst. by Miss Emlie L. Hawkins at the Steinway Hall, when a programme of considerable interest was presented. The concert giver is a pianist of no slight ability, her technical powers being controlled and directed by an obviously earnest intelligence. She played, as her principal solos, a Nocturne and a Mazurka by Chopin, Schumann's Romance in F sharp, and Lassen's "Crescendo;" two or three compositions of her own were performed, which showed the same conscientious intention. Miss Minnie Kirton and Miss Sara Bernstein were the other vocalists, each of them deserving and achieving success in their songs. The violinist was Mr. Val Marriott, and the conductors were Mr. Frederick Corder and Mr. Gilbert R. Betjemann.

The most remarkable items of the Pupils' Concert of the Guildhall School of Music, given in the Guildhall on Saturday afternoon last, were the highly creditable performances of the first movement of Schubert's unfinished Symphony and Grieg's "Peer Gynt" Suite; the former, considering the youthfulness of the performers, being especially worthy of praise. Meyerbeer's fine overture "Struensee" and Gounod's pompous "Marche Romaine" were also rendered with a light and shade and precision of attack that speaks well for Mr. Weist Hill's command of his forces. Amongst the vocalists of promise may be mentioned Miss Magdalena A' Bear and Mr. John Woodley.

There was the usual large and fashionable audience at the Lyric *soirée* on the 11th inst. The excellent Orchestral Society (conducted by Mr. Randegger) in connection with the club was heard to great advantage in

works by Hérold, Auber, Rossini, and other composers of lesser fame. Miss Lucile Hill sang with much success the valse from "Roméo et Juliette," and a charming song by Strelitzki—the violin obligato most artistically played by Mr. H. M. Morris, and the entertainment concluded with an amusing dialogue entitled "A Show of Hands," written by Mr. W. R. Walker, and spiritedly played by Miss Norreys and Mr. E. Allan Aynesworth. Mr. Luther Munday may be congratulated on yet another success.

The last of the present series of Messrs. Hann's Chamber Concerts took place on Tuesday evening at Brixton Hall, when Mozart's Quartet in D, No. 7, and Dvůřák's Quartet in A were the principal items in the programme. Both of these were played with the spirit and sympathy which marks all the performances of this talented family, some of whose members also contributed Grieg's Sonata for violin and pianoforte in F, and Mozart's "Larghetto" for 'cello. Mr. Edward Lloyd was the vocalist and sang Mendelssohn's "Garland," Gounod's "Lend me your aid," and a clever and attractive new song by Mr. Lewis Hann, "A Brighter Day will Dawn." It is surely fitting here to express the gratitude which the amateurs of Brixton should feel for this admirable series of concerts. There can be few suburbs where such excellent programmes and such excellent artists are so easily accessible. The support given to Messrs. Hann is fully deserved.

Favoured with an audience so enthusiastic that it would apparently have liked to encore everything in the programme, Mr. Joseph O'Shaughnessy gave a concert at Ladbrooke Hall on Tuesday evening, Dec. 9th. The selection of music was of the usual miscellaneous character, special successes being obtained by Miss José Sherrington ("Chanson de Bohème"—Bizet), Miss Helen Dalton ("Garden of Sleep"), Mr. Avon Saxon (Bedouin Love Song), and Mr. O'Shaughnessy himself, who gave, amongst other items, the familiar "Spirto Gentil," and Mattei's "Dear Heart," which he sang with much grace and charm. Miss Kathleen Currie contributed some clever pianoforte solos, and the efforts of several other well-known artists added materially to the interest of the entertainment.

PROVINCIAL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

LEEDS, 16th Dec.—The musical event of last week was the second Subscription Concert, which took place on the 10th. The programme was eminently a "popular" one in the best sense of that word, and the executants were four of the best known and most favourite artists now before the public, Sir Charles and Lady Hallé being the instrumentalists, and Mr. and Mrs. Henschel the vocalists. The concert opened with the most important work in the programme, Grieg's charming Sonata in F for violin and pianoforte, in which both performers were heard to the greatest possible advantage, Sir Charles Hallé, as is nearly always the case with him, seeming to play more sympathetically when associated with Lady Hallé than when alone. His solo was Beethoven's Sonata in E flat (Op. 31, No. 3), a composition well suited to the powers of the veteran pianist, the neatness and crispness of his playing being quite remarkable. Lady Hallé chose three of her most familiar solos; the Adagio from Spohr's 9th Concerto and the "Gondoliera" and "Moto Perpetuo" of Ries. Mr. and Mrs. Henschel sang two duets, the buffo duet from "Don Pasquale" and Mr. Henschel's own "Gondoliera," as well as songs by Handel, Löwe, Schumann, Liszt, and Brahms, in their own incomparable manner to Mr. Henschel's incomparable accompaniments; and though we have heard them produce greater effect in the same compositions in concert halls better suited for solo singing than the Leeds Town Hall, the extreme resonance of which helps large masses of executants more than it does single performers, they contributed very materially indeed to the success of a most delightful concert. On the 3rd an interesting and enjoyable pianoforte and violoncello recital was given by two of our ablest local musicians, Messrs. Christensen and Giessing, who were heard together in Beethoven's Sonata in G minor (Op. 5, No. 2) and two duets by Popper. Mr. Christensen also played two graceful solos of his own composition, a Nocturne and Mazurka, and Mr. Giessing gave a Nocturne by Goltermann and a Tarantella by Popper. Mrs. Creser was the vocalist, and her singing of songs by Balfe, Praeger, F. James, Henschel, and Goring Thomas met with much acceptance.

MANCHESTER.—The Vocal Society gave their second concert on the 10th inst. at the Concert Hall. Ten items were given for the first time, of which the most noticeable were Weber's "Jubilee" Cantata, J. Wrigley's "Holy, Holy," and Caldicott's "Winter days." Sir Charles Hallé gave his seventh concert on the 11th inst. Mozart's "Linz" Symphony in C major, No. 6, failed to impress us. It was admirably played, and considering the all-round excellence of the band could not be heard under more favourable circumstances; still, the work never rises to the Mozart standard, and as the work of such a master is disappointing. The overtures were Beethoven's "Festival" and Spohr's "Jessonda." Madame Schmidt-Köhne made a successful first appearance. She possesses a soprano voice of great power and brilliance, her intonation is excellent, and that she can sing with great dramatic power was evidenced by her rendering of Mozart's "Mia speranza adorata." The violoncello solos contributed by Herr Klengel, were Volkmann's concerto in A minor, an air by Bach, and an original Scherzo of his own composition. This was Herr Klengel's first appearance at these concerts, but he at once attained his position as an artist in every sense of the word, and one whose performances will always be looked forward to with pleasure. The concert suitably concluded with Rubinstein's March from "Nero." Two performances of the "Messiah" will be given by Sir Charles Hallé on the 18th and 19th. Mons. Guilmant gave an organ recital at the Town Hall on the 12th inst. The programme consisted of original works by Bach, Buxtehude, Guilmant, Wesley and others, an arrangement from Berlioz' "Faust," and an improvisation.

GLASGOW, DEC. 15TH.—The first of the orchestral concerts given under the direction of the Glasgow Choral Union took place in St. Andrew's Hall on Thursday evening last, 11th inst. It was but natural that the appearance of the distinguished conductor (Mr. August Manns) should be the signal for a tremendous outburst of applause, which continued for several minutes. The programme included Mendelssohn's "Ruy Blas" overture, Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, Mr. MacCunn's overture "Land of the Mountain and the Flood," Saint Saëns, "Le Rouet d'Omphale," and Weber's "Invitation to the Waltz." Miss MacIntyre was the vocalist, and although suffering from a cold sang admirably Mozart's "Batti, batti," and the air "L'altra notte" from "Mefistofele." As encores she gave "Let me dream again" and a piquant Bolero by Dessauer. The first Saturday Pop., given on the 13th, was a great success. The programme contained works by Wagner, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Handel, &c. Mr. Plunkett Greene was the vocalist, and sang in capital style Mozart's "Qui Sdegno," "My loves' an arbutus" (Villiers Stanford), and two songs by Battison Haynes.

BRISTOL.—At the Bristol Choral Society's first concert of the season on Saturday last Brahms' "Requiem" was performed for the first time in this city, that work and Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise" constituting the programme. During many months the members of the choir have once, sometimes twice a week studied with much assiduity the fine composition of the Hamburg Master under the inspiring guidance of Mr. Geo. Riseley; and necessary attention was also given to the perfecting of the knowledge of the more familiar work. Hence the expectation that the performance of the "Requiem" and the symphony cantata would be fine was verified. Choir and band numbered 500 members; Mr. J. H. Fulford presided at the organ, and the principal vocalists were Mrs. Hutchinson, Miss Florence Cromey, Mr. Edward Lloyd, and Mr. Montague Worlock. Mr. Riseley conducted. Considered as a whole, the interpretation of the scholarly and difficult "Requiem" was as good as, if not better than anyone that has taken place in this country. The solo vocalists and choir did their duties remarkably well; but the chief defect was the occasional preponderance of the accompaniment. The rendering of the "Lobgesang" was praiseworthy to a degree, but the rapid rate at which two movements of the symphony and two or three of the choruses were taken proved prejudicial to clearness. On Monday the last Popular concert of the season was given under Mr. Riseley's direction. The band played almost perfectly. Mendelssohn's "Calm sea and prosperous voyage" overture and Gade's Symphony in B flat (No. 4, opus 20). A choir of 200 male voices sang Mendelssohn's "Fest Gesang," "Ah! were I on yonder Plain," and "Fair Semele's highborn son" with precision and much effect save for a little uncertainty in the first composition. Miss Bourne and Miss Florence Cromey contributed songs. The Saturday Popular Society gave a good performance of the "Messiah" on Wednesday, 17th. On Tuesday the Bristol Sullivan Society sang "Iolanthe" and Watson's "Aladdin" to a large assemblage of friends.

BRIGHTON.—On Dec. 11th the Brighton and Hove Choral and Orchestral Society gave its winter concert. A new "Concert-stück" by Dr. Sawyer, the society's popular conductor, for organ and orchestra, formed an attractive item in the programme. Dr. Bridge, of Westminster, ably performed the solo organ part, and the orchestra did justice to what proved an interesting and clever composition. Dr. Bridge's "Repentance of Nineveh" occupied the second portion of the programme, and was well rendered. The solos were entrusted to Miss Emily Davies, Miss Alice Lamb, Mr. Ivor McKay, and Mr. Daniel Price, all of whom ably sustained their parts. The talented composers are to be congratulated upon such excellent works, which it is needless to state were well received. Last Tuesday an "overflowing" audience assembled to hear a pianoforte and violin recital by Sir Charles and Lady Hallé. These eminent artists were in good form, and chained their hearers by their splendid interpretations of a well chosen programme. The "Kreutzer" Sonata proved a very successful item. Sir Charles rendered Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 31, No. 3, and Chopin's "Nocturne" in G, and the "Valse Caprice" (Schubert-Liszt) in his usual perfect style, and was unanimously applauded. Lady Hallé had an enthusiastic reception, and was worthy of it, her interpretation of Ries' "Gondoliera" and "Moto perpetuo" being excellent. The two artists were equally successful in Handel's Sonata in D for piano and violin and in Heller and Ernst's "Pensées Fugitives." It is many years since Sir Charles performed in Brighton, and we hope that he will favour us again soon. The newly-formed Y.M.C.A. Orchestral Society made its *début* last Tuesday before a very large audience. Balfe's overture to the "Bohemian Girl," "Haydn's" Farewell" Symphony, Mendelssohn's "War March," and Domela's "Romance and Bolero" for violin and orchestra, the soloist being Mr. J. Lewis Mennieh, L.A.M., who also ably led the orchestra. The conductor is Mr. F. Mott Harrison, Mus. Bac.

LEYTONSTONE.—Mr. E. Cuthbert Nunn, a Royal Academy student, gave his first public pianoforte recital at the Elliott Rooms, Leytonstone, last Friday evening, Dec. 12. His programme included Beethoven's Sonata Op. 10, No. 1; Variations and Fugue, Op. 24, Brahms; some of Grieg's Lyrische Stückchen and "Bridal Procession;" pieces by Liszt, Raff, and Noddy (Tarantella, Op. 13), and two of his own pieces, an "Album Leaf" and prize Bourée, modestly placed at the end of the programme. These, all played in the orthodox manner without book, showed him in the capacity of an excellent musician and very fair executant, and a large audience testified their hearty approval in a most cordial manner. Miss Helen Saunders sang with excellent taste and pleasant voice Gounod's "Worker," two little songs by Lassen and Raff, and last, but by no means least, two songs by the Recital giver. It is here I am anxious to speak some words of unmitigated praise. Songs, really new, and yet easy to grasp and therefore effective, are so eagerly sought after that I would seriously recommend publishers "on the look out for the main chance" to keep their eyes on Mr. Nunn. Most unmistakably he is a "coming man," and it should not be long before he takes a prominent place among song-writers.

MARGATE, DEC. 15.—Mrs. Frances Talfourd, the esteemed widow of the talented dramatist and *litterateur*, Frank Talfourd, and herself an accomplished amateur vocalist, lately gave with substantial success her seventh annual appeal in aid of a local charity. As in previous years, the appeal was made to the well-disposed inhabitants of the Isle of Thanet in form of a concert at the Royal Assembly Rooms, Margate, and was well responded to. Mrs. Talfourd was assisted by Miss Galbraith, Miss Kate Flinn, and Mrs. Croft; Messrs. Bertram Thornton, Croft, and Trelawny Cobham, vocalists; Mr. Aguilar, pianist; and Mr. E. Lardner, violinist. Mrs. Talfourd did not gratify her audience by any solo display; she, however, exhibited her undeniable talent in Gordigiani's Trio, "Vieni al Mar," with Mr. and Mrs. Croft, and with Mr. Cobham in Arditi's duet, "La Notte in Venezia." Mr. Aguilar pleased his audience by his performance of a Polonaise by Chopin and by his own brilliant Fantasia on Scottish airs, Mr. Lardner contributing two movements from De Beriot's Seventh Concerto and Wieniawski's well known "Legende." The concert received further support from Messrs. Russe, Hardy, James, and Nichol, who sang with effect Hatton's "When evening's twilight" and other part-songs. Mr. Aguilar and Mr. Russe accompanied the vocal music. The concert was followed by Scott Gatty's "Plantation songs," sung by eight voices (solos by Dr. Nichol), and other entertainments.

SHERBORNE.—The Sherborne Philharmonic Society opened their third season on Monday, when they produced Louis N. Parker's new dramatic cantata, "Young Tamlane." The first part of the concert was miscel-

laneous, and the most striking numbers were Elsa's Dream from "Lohengrin" and Liszt's beautiful song, "Die Loreley," both exquisitely sung by Miss Marianne Rea. Miss Elsie Holme received an *encore* for her rendering of a pretty little song by Erik Meyer-Helmund. The Cantata occupied the entire second part, and was received with great favour, the audience insisting upon the composer appearing twice to acknowledge their applause. The principal female part is written for an alto, and Miss Elsie Holme displayed intense artistic feeling, a beautiful voice, and an excellent style in its performance. The part is a long and trying one, but Miss Holme had fully mastered it and made it her own. Miss Rea had only a very short part in the cantata, but what she had to do was admirably done. Mr. E. T. Morgan of Bristol was the tenor, and created great effect in a picturesque solo and in the duet with Miss Holme. Mr. Hodson completed an admirable cast. Owing to the continuous character of the music there was no applause during the course of the performance, but at the end of each scene the applause was spontaneous and hearty. The singing of the choruses was beyond all praise. There is every sort of chorus in "Young Tamlane," from grave to gay from lively to severe; chorus for male voices, for female voices, and, of course, for mixed voices, and all were sung with precision and vigour. It was a great pity that no orchestra was available, but in its absence the accompaniments could not have been better played than they were by Mrs. Regan, who with true artistic unselfishness volunteered to undertake a task which is sometimes most foolishly considered beneath the dignity of a first-rate player. Her co-operation was of inestimable value to the composer. "Young Tamlane" is to be performed with full orchestra by the Salisbury Vocal Union on Jan. 22, and Miss Holme has been specially invited to sing the part of Janet. We may add that this cantata seems to us eminently worthy of the attention of choral societies. It is of exactly the right length, and every part of the choir has melodious *bonnes bouches* allotted to it such as choristers delight in.

REVIEWS.

"From my Boyhood." By Luke Berrington, Guide to the Royal Tombs in Westminster Abbey. (Of the Author, 55, Page-street, Westminster.) Although the writer of this little book has been for nearly fifty years at the Abbey, his anecdotes in that connection occupy barely ten pages of it. For his real life, abounding in varied and amusing incidents, we have to go back to the first half of the century: music was the mainspring of his early career. Mr. Berrington, whose spare figure and long silvery locks must be familiar to all frequenters of the Abbey, was born in 1815. His childhood was spent in his native county, Sussex, amidst lovely natural surroundings, which even at that age he was quick to appreciate, and of which he agreeably and instructively discoursed. Scarcely, however, had he emerged from boyhood when—having with that view mastered the key-bugle—he was made guard of one of the old coaches, in which capacity he continued from 1830 until the advent of the "iron horse." Needless to say that this mode of life afforded a fine field for reminiscences which fill several pleasant pages. From the coach to the caravan; Mr Berrington's next move was to join Wombwell's Menagerie as second bugle. During this engagement, during which he saw many men and cities, he had

two hair-breadth escapes—one from the formidable elephant Chuney, the other from some dangerous leopards into whose cage he was unexpectedly precipitated. The time came, however, when musical engagements of a more extended scope attracted him; and leaving Wombwell and deserting the key-bugle for the trombone, he joined the band of the Coldstream Guards. After three years' service he purchased his discharge, and was then for thirty years hardly ever out of an engagement in various orchestras—Vauxhall Gardens, Sadler's Wells, Covent Garden, Drury Lane, and Jullien's. Mr. Berrington's appointment to the Abbey Guides Corps dates from 1841. His *brochure*, written simply and in a style of his own, is full of entertaining matter, and an excellent shilling's-worth.

MUSIC FOR CHILDREN.

[From WEEKS and Co.]

"Red Riding Hood," a lilliputian opera, written by R. André, music by Isidore de Solla, is admirably conceived and well adapted to its purpose. There is genuine humour both in words and music, and much profit and amusement will result to all who undertake to "get up" the little work for the "Theatre Royal Back Drawing Room."

[From J. WILLIAMS.]

"Action Songs" may also be recommended as embodying an admirable idea excellently carried out. Each song is furnished with a chorus, and is intended to be acted as well as sung, to which end a simple and very practical series of directions are given at the close of each piece. The subjects are well adapted to interest the juvenile mind, and the music, by various popular composers, is appropriately bright and tuneful. In addition to the ordinary notation the tonic sol-fa signs are also placed over the words.

"Dolldom, a Doll's Opera," words by Clifton Bingham, music by Florian Pascal, is another of those praiseworthy efforts which are calculated to brighten childhood and fill it with happy recollections. The plot is amusingly worked out, and the music, as might be inferred from so accomplished a pen, is refined and musicianly.

[From J. CURWEN and SONS.]

"Mabel's Songs for Little Singers," by G. Nakony, set to English words by A. J. Foxwell, may be taken as a model for what children's songs should be. The words are full of genuine childish fun, and in the majority of cases quaintly impress some healthy precept. The music is equally well adapted to the capacities of the little singers, and one could wish oneself a child again to enjoy the pleasure of singing such dainty ditties.

[From CHARLES WOOLHOUSE.]

"Songs for Children from Five to Ten Years of Age," by Mrs. Liebreich, have the additional merit of being arranged for one or two voices. They are exceedingly melodious, and the little tales the songs unfold are well conceived to arouse the sympathies and merriment of young vocalists.

[From HUTCHINGS and ROMER.]

"Funny Folks' Concert," Cantata for children, by Mrs. Alexander Roberts, the music by James Greenhill, engages the services of such time-honoured favourites as "Dame Hubbard," "Little Bopeep," and "Master Tom Tucker," who relate their experiences and state their opinions in amusing couplets set to bright music. The score is arranged for toy instruments *ad lib.*, the employment of which would doubtless add to the young performer's enjoyment, though in such cases the musical effect is not always commensurate with the variety of tonal colour.

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MUSICAL WORLD

1889—May 4.	Edward Grieg.
May 11.	Carl Rosa.
May 18.	F. H. Cowen.
May 25.	Senor Sarasate.
June 1.	Frederic Cliffe.
June 8.	Prof. Herkimer's "An Idyl."
June 15.	Franklin Hermine Spies.
June 22.	Signorina Teresina Tua.
June 29.	Madame Marcella Sembrich.
July 6.	Madame Backer Gröndhal.
July 13.	Sir John Stainer.
July 20.	Madame Lillian Nordica.
July 27.	M. Jean de Reszke.
Aug. 3.	Charles Dibdin.
Aug. 10.	Joseph Hollman.
Aug. 17.	Madame Sarah Bernhardt.
Aug. 24.	Frau Amalie Materna.
Aug. 31.	Herr Van Dyck.
Sept. 7.	M. Johannes Wolf.
Sept. 14.	Madame Patey.
Sept. 21.	Mr. Arthur Oswald.
Sept. 28.	The Bayreuth Conductors.
Oct. 5.	Miss Rosalind F. Ellicott.
Oct. 12.	Dr. A. C. Mackenzie.
Oct. 19.	Dr. Bernhard Scholz.
Oct. 26.	Madame Patti-Nicollini.
Nov. 2.	Johannes Brahms.
Nov. 9.	Professor Villiers Stanford.
Nov. 16.	Arrigo Boito.
Nov. 23.	Mr. and Mrs. Henschel.
Nov. 30.	Miss Marianne Eissler.
Dec. 7.	Madame Trebelli.
Dec. 14.	Mr. J. H. Bonawitz.
Dec. 21.	Robert Browning.
Dec. 28.	Miss Grace Damian.
1890—Jan. 4.	Mr. Plunket Greene.
Jan. 11.	Mr. Frederick Corder.
Jan. 18.	Madame Georgina Burns.
Jan. 25.	Professor Arthur de Greef.
Feb. 1.	Miss Margaret Macintyre.
Feb. 8.	Mr. J. L. Toole.
Feb. 15.	Miss Caroline Geisler-Schubert.
Feb. 22.	Browning's "Strafford."
Mar. 1.	Mr. Leslie Crotty.
Mar. 8.	Miss Marguerite Hall.
Mar. 15.	Mr. Hamish Mac Cunn.
Mar. 22.	The Late Dr. Wyld.
Mar. 29.	Mr. Frederic Lamond.
April 5.	Dr. G. C. Martin.
April 12.	Miss Agnes Janson.
April 19.	Mrs. Langtry.
April 26.	Miss Zélie de Lussan.
May 3.	Mr. Bernard Staven.
May 10.	Miss Fanny Moody.
May 17.	Madame Teresa Carreno.
May 24.	Mr. Henry Arthur Jones.
May 31.	Mr. J. J. Paderewski.
June 7.	Moritz Moszkowski.
June 14.	Madame Sophie Menter.
June 21.	Miss Ada Rehan.
June 28.	Herr Willy Hess.
July 5.	Miss Janotha.
July 12.	M. Sapellnikoff.
July 19.	Mr. Hermann Vezin.
July 26.	Mr. Willard.
Aug. 2.	Miss Amy Sherwin.
Aug. 9.	Mrs. Kendal.
Aug. 16.	Signor Piatti.
Aug. 23.	Signor Foll.
Aug. 30.	Mr. F. R. Benson.
Sept. 6.	Madame Clara Schumann.
Sept. 13.	Mr. Edward Lloyd.
Sept. 20.	Miss Dorothy Deane.
Sept. 27.	Mr. Charles Santley.
Oct. 4.	Henrik Ibsen.
Oct. 11.	Miss Kate Chaplin.
Oct. 18.	Dr. H. H. Parry.
Oct. 25.	Sir Charles Hallé.
Nov. 1.	Senor Albeniz.
Nov. 8.	Mr. F. Barrington Foote.
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Nov. 22.	Rev. H. R. Haweis.
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Dec. 6.	L. E. Bach.

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